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ABSTRACT

This hearing was part of a week of events commemorating National Children's Day. The hearing focused on children who have overcome adverse situations through innovative private and public programs. More than 200 youth ambassadors were sent by their state governors to represent 45 states at the events in the District of Columbia. The presentation of testimony was introduced by honorary chairperson Cissy Houston and her daughter, Whitney Houston. Testimony was offered to the task force by 20 youth ambassadors. These ambassadors discussed their positive experiences with programs that involved teaching parenting skills to teen mothers and providing: (1) means for teen mothers to continue their education; (2) jobs for youth; (3) assistance to migrant and refugee families; (4) assistance to disabled youth; (5) peer counseling, and (6) community projects. More than 150 other individuals submitted prepared statements to the task force. Almost all these individuals were young people; several were representatives of service organizations. (BC)

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NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY: A CELEBRATION OF PROGRAMS THAT WORK

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HEARING

BEFORE THE

TASK FORCE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FIRST CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4, 1990

Printed for the use of the Committee on the Budget

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NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY: A CELEBRATION OF PROGRAMS THAT WORK

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4, 1990

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
TASK FORCE ON HUMAN RESOURCES,
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET,
Washington, DC.

The Task Force met, pursuant to notice, at 9:05 a.m., in room 2237, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Barbara Boxer, chairperson, presiding.

Mrs. BOXER. We are going to get started. I will speak as loud as I can.

I know you are all here because Congressman Kennedy and I are here. It has nothing to do with our first very special witness. I am very pleased that you did come.

I do want to say, many times in this Budget Committee, we do have people who come from the entertainment community to put themselves forward to help us in the fight for a better America.

I also want to say to them how grateful we are because it is because of you that we have so much coverage here today. And the fact that you would give up your privacy, which I know that you cherish, is very important to us. We thank you very, very much. I want to welcome all of you. This idea emanated from my good colleague from Massachusetts, Representative Kennedy.

I want to welcome you to the Budget Committee Task Force on Human Resources in honor of National Children's Day. It is wonderful to see so many ambassadors from all over the United States assembled here in our Nation's Capital. I hope that you will take the time to learn a little more about our democratic system of government. I suspect you have a few lessons in store for us.

It is an exciting time to witness what is happening in the world with the walls coming down in Europe and people choosing democracy. I think the lesson for us is it only works when people participate. You are learning that today, that your participation is making news. Your participation can very well change the way this country chooses its priorities. What you are doing today is important.

I don't want it to end for you after this hearing. I want you to continue your involvement, your concern.

Over the past 2 years this Task Force, along with Chairman George Miller's Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, has helped shine a spotlight on the needs of America's children. We have inquired into the problems of poor pregnant women,

and children born into unfortunate circumstances. We have fought for increased funding for cost-effective programs like WIC, which provides nutrition for pregnant women and their newborn children, and for Head Start. We also have argued for increased support for education programs. As global competition grows increasingly fierce, we must commit the resources to make our young people the best educated in the world. The resources are there; the knowledge is there; now we must provide the leadership.

Your appearance before this Task Force could hardly be more timely. Congress is wrestling with a monumental budget agreement that would affect every area in which the Government is active. The theme of this hearing is "Programs that Work." As we look at ways to reduce the deficit, our need to isolate successful programs has never been greater. Today, some of you will have an opportunity to influence the priorities of the Federal Government.

I want to direct a few words to those of you who will not be testifying this morning.

There are over 175 child ambassadors present today. We read every written statement that was submitted to us, and they were uniformly excellent. Many of you have overcome formidable obstacles to get here today; others have used more comfortable surroundings as platforms to aid those less fortunate. I congratulate and commend every one of you.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the efforts of my colleague, Congressman Joe Kennedy. He has done a great job of organizing the Children's Day and Children's Week events and has established himself as a true champion of our children.

We welcome you. Our first witness will be coming. I am going to call on Congressman Kennedy first. I just want to talk about the rules of the hearing, if I can, for a moment. What we are going to do is after the first States have been heard from on the first panel, I am going to ask those of you from that State to go as quietly as you can out the door and then we will let the other ambassadors come in.

So with that, I will call on Congressman Joe Kennedy, with my deepest thanks for your great work.

STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH P. KENNEDY II, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS

Mr. KENNEDY. It is not exactly the reception I get at the Banking Committee, Barbara.

Let me just say how delighted I am to see each and every one of you here today. Forty-six States sent up to four children each and two U.S. territories have also sent kids. I just want to say how delighted everybody here in the Congress is that you have come from such a long way away and how delighted everybody is to be able to receive the testimony that you are going to provide us.

I have already received some letters here from some youngsters here in the State of Maryland, that we are going to include in the Congressional Record.

I am sure that Chairwoman Boxer would be happy to keep the record open for this hearing if any of you have statements or even written statements that you would like us to submit into the offi-

cial record of the Congress of the United States about what your concerns for our country are, what kind of experiences that you have had growing up and what you think our Government ought to be doing to try and make life a little bit easier for kids and perhaps to have society recognize the tremendous role that young people play that so often, I think, get ignored by our elders.

So I just want to let you know it is really terrific that each and every one of you have come. I think this is exactly what we need in the Congress, is to get a little zip and a little new life into some of these hallways. I think you will be providing us that in the next few days. Welcome to Washington, DC.

Let me also take this opportunity to give my sincere thanks and appreciation to Chairwoman Boxer for agreeing to hold these hearings and for all the tremendous work she does on behalf of our Nation's children. This is the second consecutive year that she has held a hearing commemorating National Children's Day, which I think is indicative of her deep concern and interest in our Nation's children.

Children have a true friend and advocate through Barbara Boxer's work here on this committee and in Congress by the programs she fights for that are desperately needed to give children a fair chance to succeed. I want to commend her.

You know how much I admire the work you have done, Barbara, and the dedication throughout your years of service here in our Nation's capital to our country's most vulnerable citizens, our children.

Barbara is also, I should say, a candidate for the U.S. Senate.

Mrs. BOXER. Not yet, not officially.

Mr. KENNEDY. She is unofficially a candidate for the Senate of the United States. I know we all wish her well. I also want to express my thanks to Cissy Houston and her daughter, Whitney, for their efforts. How about a big hand for both of them.

As Barbara said when Whitney first came in, there are so many entertainers that do very, very well in our society today and many of them do participate in the affairs of our country. But there are also a whole bunch of people out there that do their work, make their money and go home and feel that that in fact has let them off the hook in terms of their commitment to this great country. But Whitney Houston has separated herself by having her family involved in a foundation that is set up specifically for the needs of our Nation's youth.

I think all of us have been inspired by her songs, but also people have been inspired by the hard work that she does behind the scenes to make sure that many of the important issues that affect our country, particularly our Nation's youth, are being affected here in Washington and throughout the rest of the nation.

So we owe you a deep gratitude, Whitney. Thank you very much for the work and support that you have provided here for Children's Day.

I think one of the songs that Whitney Houston sings sums up why honoring children as a special day is so important. The lyrics read, "I believe the children are our future. Teach them well and let them lead the way. Show them all the beauty they possess

inside. Give them a sense of pride and make it easier. Let the children's laughter remind us of how we used to be."

You probably are all happy that I read that and didn't try to sing it. Anyway, maybe we can convince Whitney to do that later.

It is with that spirit that we celebrate National Children's Day.

Finally, I want to extend my deep appreciation to David Leaderman, the executive director of the Child Welfare League of America and the steering chair of our National Children's Day Committee. Without his commitment to this project and his ability to bring in folks who are committed to the kids like the Anthony E. Casey Foundation, we would have never gotten this far.

Is David here this morning? He is on his way from New York. I want you to meet David a little bit later. He has done a tremendous job for all of us.

These are important times for our Congress and for our Nation. As we consider a budget reduction plan, we are making critical decisions affecting the health and welfare of our Nation's citizens. Reducing guaranteed student loans by $2 billion and reducing mandatory programs like AFDC will have far-reaching effects on our kids' ability to compete and succeed in society.

So as we debate the budget this week and we plan for our next budget next year, we must keep in mind how our Nation's children are doing.

The odds are stacked against kids today. Of the children in our country, 25 percent live in poverty; 90 percent of high school students try alcohol or drugs; 50 percent of inner-city kids drop out of high school before they finish; and 100,000 children on any given night sleep on the streets. But by providing access to a number of good programs, we can reach out and help these kids to beat the odds.

Every one of you in this room has risen above circumstances, has reached out to others in the community or has been involved in some program that has improved other lives. By honoring you, others will be inspired.

Kelly Sanchez from New Mexico is a teen mother, but with the help of the New Future School, she was able to stay in school and complete her education. Andrew Nestor from Maryland struggled with substance abuse until he found the strength and courage and the help of an outpatient and school group program. He is able now to stay clean.

Jorge Ochilla from Idaho has become an exemplary student thanks to his determination and the help of the migrant summer school program. David Bailey from New Hampshire faced some difficult times at home, but was able to overcome this with the help of the Homeward Bound Program. Rhea Flowers from Missouri has beaten the odds by learning to take charge of her own life despite being bumped around by foster programs with the help of an independent living program.

Time, effort, dedication, understanding and guidance are key to successful programs. But without funding, these programs cannot survive.

I think passage of the Young Americans Act this year would be a good start to begin to fund these model programs. This bill also establishes a national youth policy and provides kids with an oppor-

tunity to become involved in political decisions. The Young Americans Act is currently tied up in the Human Services reauthorization conference. I need your help to get this through.

There is a false notion in this country that people just don't count if they are under 21 years of age. There is a notion that kids are not productive citizens, that they shouldn't be taken seriously. There is a notion that the productive employment opportunities are only meant for those age 21 or over. We have to dispel these notions and begin investing in our children's lives.

I think Abraham Lincoln summed it up well when he said: A child is a person who is going to carry on what we have started. He is going to sit where you are sitting. And when you are gone, attend to those things which you think are important. You may adopt all the policies you please. But how they are carried out depends on them. He will assume control of your cities, your states and your nation. He is going to move in and take your churches, your schools, your university, your corporations. The fate of humanity is in your hands.

Madam Chairwoman and Members of this Task Force and honored guests, let's seize the opportunity and improve our children's lives. Our Nation's future depends on this.

I want to again thank my good friend, Barbara Boxer and all the Members of this Task Force who will be hearing from you today and who will be very interested in studying the testimony that you submit so that we can create better policies for our country and for our Nation's young people.

Thank you all very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kennedy may be found at end of hearing.]

Mrs. BOXER. Thank you again, Congressman Kennedy.

Because the Congressman made reference to members of this Task Force, I do want to say that last year we had a number of Members from both political parties, at our hearing. This year, because of the crisis on the budget, we have several Republican Members who are at the White House and many Democrats who are speaking with the leadership today. We have a crisis on our hands.

As a matter of fact, we are debating the very priorities of this country. We have a deficit reduction plan that many of us feel falls far short of what we need to do for this country.

The fact of the matter is, the reason there aren't so many more Members here is because they are engaged in this crucial issue which we didn't expect would come at this very moment in time. So forgive us if there aren't more of us. I myself have to leave in about 40 minutes. Congressman Kennedy will take the chair at that time.

So I am very anxious to hear from as many of you as is possible. There is an official record of this hearing. It will be given to every Member of the Budget Committee. They all will see it because all of them were so disappointed that they could not be here. I am hoping some will drift in and out.

At this point it is my privilege to welcome Whitney Houston and ask her to come up and take the microphone. Her mother, Cissy Houston, is going to introduce her actually, and I think she can do

a far better introduction than I. We invite you to make that introduction. Mrs. Houston, mother.

STATEMENT OF CISSY HOUSTON, HONORARY CHAIRPERSON, NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY

Mrs. CISSY HOUSTON. Good morning and thank you.

Madam Chairwoman, Congressman Goodling, members of the Budget Committee Task Force, Congressman Kennedy and you, the ambassadors, my name is Cissy Houston.

First, allow me to commend you for taking a bold lead on such an important issue and for your willingness to hold this hearing in order to hear firsthand from some of the young people of our country. For the second time you have provided an opportunity for young people to speak out and be heard.

It is my true hope that all our efforts combined will lead us to a greater understanding and appreciation of the members, of the problems facing young people today.

As a mother, my first concern has always been my children: my sons, Gary and Michael, and my daughter, Whitney. I have always been concerned with children's issues. I believe if we don't protect our children, provide a safe environment for them, guide them by example and help them to feel good about themselves, we have no future.

As chairperson of National Children's Day, I am proud to be part of a celebration of young people who have said, "I will make it," who have benefited from programs that work and who have come to spread the news.

I am equally proud to be able to present my very own youth ambassador. Ladies and gentlemen, my daughter, Whitney Houston.

STATEMENT OF WHITNEY HOUSTON, FOUNDER, WHITNEY HOUSTON FOUNDATION

Ms. WHITNEY HOUSTON. Thank you.

Madam Chairperson——

Mrs. BOXER. We welcome you officially. We listen and hang on your every word. Go right ahead.

Ms. WHITNEY HOUSTON. Thank you. You guys are great. Thank you.

Madam Chairperson, Congressman Goodling, Members of the Budget Committee, Congressman Kennedy and Mommy, I am Whitney Houston. I would like to thank all of you for making this hearing possible and for inviting me to participate.

I am honored to sit here before you today in support of National Children's Day, a celebration of our Nation's greatest resource. It is our youth.

I am here because I believe the children are our future, the future of our country and of the world. Not every child is blessed with the positive role models and strong family support that I have. However, every child, regardless of their circumstances, has a special gift, a special contribution to make to their communities and to the world.

I am encouraged that you as influential leaders and lawmakers in our country recognize the value of the hopes and dreams of our children.

This morning, you will hear from 20 young people from around the country who are representing their States, their peers and programs that work. For every young person here today, there are millions of other children around the country waiting to be heard. Their concerns are our concerns.

The continued investment we make in our children's future is our obligation because our time before you is limited and precious.

I would like to thank you all again and allow you to now hear from these wonderful young people, our youth ambassadors.

[Applause.]

Mrs. BOXER. If you two would like to remain up here while the first panel comes, we would love you to. I would ask that you take those two chairs right on the side there, right at the head table, but right at the side.

Then I would ask our first panel of young people to come forward. Anita Taylor of Pennsylvania, who was invited here by Congressman Goodling and Congressman Ridge. Please come forward.

I ask unanimous consent that Congressman Goodling's statement be included in the record. Hearing no objection, it will be done.

[The statement of Mr. Goodling may be found at end of hearing.]

Mrs. BOXER. Included in the first panel are Jonathan Silverman from Massachusetts; Tara Chamness from Illinois; Donna Washington from Mississippi; Cipriano Nevarez of Texas; Alice W. Tuck of Maine; and Aundra Henderson of West Virginia.

I want to welcome you. We are pleased to see you all here. We would ask Anita Taylor to start. Just relax. As you are relaxing, speak into the microphone.

STATEMENT OF ANITA TAYLOR, YOUTH AMBASSADOR, PENNSYLVANIA

Ms. TAYLOR. When I first got pregnant, I didn't know what to do. I was 17 and scared. I wouldn't go to the doctor because I didn't want anyone to know. I thought about having an abortion, but I just couldn't do that to myself and my unborn child. I also thought about giving my child up for adoption. I didn't know what to do. I prayed for a solution to my problem.

School came quickly and so did the morning sickness. I could barely keep my lunch down and went to the school nurse for help. She was very kind and talked to me about my health and that I needed to see a doctor.

She was concerned about me and my baby and arranged for my appointment at the health care center. She made me realize that I had to face my situation, and the first step was to tell my mother. She was hurt, but she couldn't really say anything because she made the same mistake when she was younger.

I started attending the Teen Parenting class during school and learned how to care for myself and my unborn child. I also began to prepare for my child's care by registering for the Infant-Toddler Child Care Program at the school.

When I could no longer attend classes at school, a tutor came to my home so I wouldn't get behind in my studies. After the birth of my baby, I completed the arrangements for his care so I could finish my school year.

While I attend classes, my son is in the Child Care Center where he receives a nutritional snack, a hot lunch and lots of loving care. Transportation to and from school for the two of us is provided by the school.

I still attend the teen parenting classes that help young mothers cope with the responsibility of raising children.

I love the Farrell Area School District because it has given me the opportunity to stay in school, continue my education and prepare for my future as a doctor.

The Farrell School District feels responsible for the education of all people in the community from the youngest to the oldest, from birth to death. The school believes that most of the problems that cause children to fail can be solved before a child reaches the age of 5. There are 12 preschool programs that take care of these children and any problem they might have.

We have day care for working and single parents, Head Start education for children who are poor or have handicaps, a parenting program to teach parents to be good mothers and fathers.

The Latchkey Child Care Center gives kids a safe and supervised place to stay after school so they won't go home to an empty house or be tempted to roam the streets. Students who are suspended for discipline are placed in this center rather than sent home unsupervised.

Kindergarten students learn to read and write by computer in the Right to Read Program. If they are not ready for first grade, they are placed in a developmental program. No young child in the Farrell School should ever experience failure. All of us are supported by many special programs.

We have access to mental and physical health clinics at the school. We can also volunteer in the community through the Penn-Serve Program. Our students are the eighth poorest in the State of Pennsylvania where 65 percent are minorities.

Almost no one drops out of our school. Sixty-five percent of us go on to college, and the Jobs for Pennsylvania Graduates Program helps the rest of us find jobs.

We are at the top in our State for student self-esteem. We receive hot breakfast and lunch during the school year and a free hot lunch every day during the summer.

Our school is open all day and all evening, but no one ever damages anything. We feel good about our school and ourselves, and it shows.

Even adults attend our school at night to learn to read and write, earn a diploma or improve their skills by taking continuing education classes.

The children of Farrell have a future. We will take our place in society and believe that schools are a better place than jails.

I would like to thank the U.S. Congress, Governor Robert P. Casey, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education for this opportunity to share Farrell's commitment to children.

The programs of the Farrell School District and the State of Pennsylvania will make a difference for America and the 21st century. Believe me, they work. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Taylor may be found at end of hearing.]

Mrs. BOXER. Thank you, Anita. You just started us off beautifully.

Jonathan Silverman from Massachusetts. Welcome.

STATEMENT OF JONATHAN SILVERMAN, YOUTH AMBASSADOR, MASSACHUSETTS

Mr. SILVERMAN. My name is Jonathan Silverman. I am the chairperson of the Massachusetts State Student Advisory Council to the Board of Education. The Student Advisory Council was established in 1971 by Chapter 1009 of the Massachusetts General Laws. Our membership consists of two high school students, elected by their peers, from every public high school in the State.

To better address the needs and issues of students, our organization is divided into 11 Regional Student Advisory Councils, each of which elect representatives to serve on the State Student Advisory Council.

The students in the Student Advisory Council create the group's agenda for the year. This process of prioritizing and goal setting is facilitated by the advisors to the Council who are staff members of the Massachusetts Department of Education. The members then join task forces to better focus on accomplishing the goals which they have set.

This year the goals of the Student Advisory Council center on improving education for all of Massachusetts' students. Massachusetts' students have been faced with 2 years of teacher layoffs, smaller course and extracurricular offerings, increasingly crowded classrooms, and uncertainty regarding the fate of our public schools.

In a society in which education is so highly valued, it is ironic and unfair that Massachusetts' students must watch as their schools become less able to educate. The Student Advisory Council is working hard to end these cutbacks.

We are actively encouraging the mainstreaming of special education students. We are promoting school mediation programs as an effective way to reduce the violence which is so rampant in our schools. We are teaching other students about the Bill of Rights, ability grouping in school, and the injustices caused by racism, sexism, and homophobia.

The AIDS epidemic, experts say, will next ravage the youth community. We will work to educate students about this easily preventable killer. Information on this lurking danger isn't enough! We hope to help other student and health groups provide students with protection from the virus, as one Massachusetts high school has done.

Our organization is effective in airing student's concerns, and it provides superb leadership opportunities for students across the State. The Student Advisory Council is a way for young people to get involved in their schools and communities. The framework for

the Student Advisory Council can be easily and inexpensively replicated in any State.

This program has taught me a lot about education, political action, other people, and youth issues. But most of all, it has taught me that yes, you can make a difference.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Silverman may be found at end of hearing.]

Mrs. BOXER. Thank you very much. Tara Chamness from Illinois. Welcome.

STATEMENT OF TARA CHAMNESS, YOUTH AMBASSADOR, ILLINOIS

Ms. CHAMNESS. Project Chance has made a big difference in my life and that of Brooke, my 17-month-old daughter. Before Brooke was born, I had hoped for a career in the health care area. Once I had her, I didn't know how I'd be able to go to school and take care of my baby, too.

Being a teen mother isn't easy in itself, but adding the responsibility of going to school and studying too, I didn't know if I could do it. Then there was the financial part of school to face, also.

When I went to Project Chance to see if they could help me, I was nervous and was waiting for the customary feeling of being looked down on because of being a teen mom. From the very first moment, Loretta, my caseworker, made me feel good about my goals and going on to school. She took my application, explained what Project Chance is all about and just how they could help me attain my goals. When I took the test and made 100 percent, she made me feel like she was really proud of me, too.

Project Chance has helped me with my books for school, the uniforms that are necessary for the nurses training at John A. Logan College, and gas mileage to and from school. Loretta has always been just a phone call away if I had a question about anything. She has provided me with listings of the available day care for Brooke, and never fails to ask about how Brooke has adjusted to my going to school and what quality time she and I are able to have together. I don't think that is included in her job, and that's part of what makes working with Project Chance such a good experience.

The people at the Marion Office for Project Chance make me feel good about myself and what I am able to achieve on my own. I think that that is what makes this program work. I'm not just a case number. I'm Tara Chamness, person, mother, and student.

I have just finished my first semester at John A. Logan College with a 4.7, and I couldn't wait to tell Loretta. I think she was almost as excited as I was. She keeps telling me that I can go places, and she helps me keep believing it, too. I feel good about what I'm doing, and that has a big impact on how Brooke sees her mommy.

I don't have to settle for a minimum wage job and trying to take care of the baby on that kind of salary. I'm going to be able to have a career that I'm proud of, one that will provide for my daughter and myself.

What makes Project Chance work, in my opinion, are the people in the offices that we rely on so much and their attitude toward us.

They make it so easy to feel good about yourself, and they really care about each and every one of us as individuals. Besides being there to help provide the books and other things necessary for school, they offer positive support. That shouldn't ever be minimized.

Too often, as a teen mom, when asking for help, I have been just a case number, and that's demoralizing, but never at Project Chance.

The moral support, to me, is what makes this program work. I just thank God that I have this chance to go on to get a good education and that I have the support of Loretta and the others at the Marion Project Chance Office to back me up.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Chamness may be found at end of hearing.]

Mrs. BOXER. Thank you, Tara. We are very pleased at this time to be joined by Bill Goodling of Pennsylvania. Congressman Goodling is very instrumental in helping us put this together. He invited our very first panelist, Anita Taylor.

You would have been so proud of her story. She is going to be a doctor some day. Now she is an excellent student and an excellent mom. She is on her way.

Mr. Goodling, you are welcome to make any comments you might like to at this moment.

Mr. GOODLING. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. I won't read my statement since you have placed it in the record.

Anita, I am sorry I wasn't here to introduce you. I was downtown at the White House getting some marching orders on how to try to save the budget proposal. I told Congressman Ridge you would be here. I am sure he will try to be here as well. He was also downtown getting the same orders.

We on the Budget Committee, Chairwoman Boxer and I, have a golden opportunity because we team up with Mr. Kildee, who also serves on the Education and Labor Committee with me; and normally, I think—maybe we shouldn't say this publicly—we probably get more than our share when we team together. This is because everybody on that Budget Committee represents the interests that they think are the most important. I happen to think education and labor, which also deals with child nutrition, is the most important.

I do want to thank all of the young people for coming. My life has been one of working with young people as an educator. They always ask me if I miss my school. I say I miss all of my students, most of my employees, and some of the parents. I don't say that back in the district.

Again, thank you for coming. We know that you are our precious resource, and our future is going to depend on the Anita Taylors of the future. We want to do whatever we can at the Federal level to help you reach those goals. Thank you.

Mrs. BOXER. From the State of Mississippi, Donna Washington. Welcome.

STATEMENT OF DONNA WASHINGTON, YOUTH AMBASSADOR, MISSISSIPPI

Ms. WASHINGTON. Good morning. My name is Donna Washington. The essay I submitted was the ways in which the Mississippi Job Corps Center helped me from becoming a victim of hopelessness and helplessness.

The Mississippi Job Corps Program helps me from becoming a victim of hopelessness in many different ways. I have had many different experiences of feeling hopeless and helpless.

First of all, the Mississippi Job Corps Program has changed my life completely. Before I entered the program, I felt like I was one of life's failures. I felt that I couldn't succeed any goal that I tried to reach. I was feeling down, and I needed a pick-me-up. Instead of turning to drugs or alcohol, life's most common addictions, I chose the Job Corps Program.

The decision I made was absolutely done correct. Soon I entered the program on the day of May 18, 1988. During my stay at the Mississippi Job Corps Center, I obtained a trade which is nurse aide. Also, I obtained a GED. Soon after that, I became actuated by my experiences. After that period, I began to progress even more.

A job I received, employed by Christian City Convalescent Center in Atlanta, GA, I don't feel hopeless or helpless any more. I feel that I can succeed any goal.

You all need to have the ambition to succeed. It will keep you off the street and keep you from being alone and homeless. Realize that there are different kinds of programs that help prevent us from becoming a victim of hopelessness, helplessness and homelessness.

Get involved. Stop feeling sorry for yourself. Obtain the goals that you have set out to succeed. Get with the program, the Mississippi Job Corps Program. It helps the ones that want to be helped.

There are two requirements asked of the enrollee. First, do your best. Second, treat others as you want to be treated. The Mississippi Job Corps' purpose is to see that the student and I obtain employment at the highest pay level possible once we have completed our education and vocational training.

All students are treated equally with no discrimination of any kind. Students are placed in the Mississippi Job Corps Center without regard to race, national origin, sex or handicap. The Mississippi Job Corps Center has proven to help the young generation. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Washington may be found at end of hearing.]

Mrs. BOXER. Thank you very much, Donna. We add congratulations to you. Cipriano Nevarez. Thank you and welcome. Cipriano is from Texas.

STATEMENT OF CIPRIANO NEVAREZ, YOUTH AMBASSADOR, EL PASO, TX

Ms. NEVAREZ. My name is Cipriano Nevarez. I am 16 years old and was born in Zaragosa, a small town in Mexico. I am sophomore at Socorro High School which is in El Paso TX. I come from a family of seven. My father, Jaime, is a construction worker and my

mother, Maria, is now a housewife. I have two younger brothers, Jesus and Lorenzo, and two sisters, Nellie and Araceli. They all attend school in El Paso.

I am representing the Texas Migrant Program. This program serves 187 students in the Socorro Independent School District and has been in operation for over 30 years. It helps explain to parents the importance of staying in one place so that their children can attend school. My family has moved several times to do farm work since I was born, but now we have decided to live in El Paso.

The Migrant Program offered me and 94 other students a chance to spend the summer at St. Edwards University in Austin, TX. It helped me in knowing what the real world will be like and recognizing the difference from working in the field and working in a nice air-conditioned office. It also helped me in learning to live on my own without my parents' help. I think this was very helpful for me and many of the other students.

When I was in the program this summer, I received an award from my supervisors for excellent work habits. I also received certificates for highest average in math and good behavior. I received many other awards in my classes; this made me feel good about myself.

Before I went to the program, I wasn't really sure of what I wanted to do with my future. I didn't really have any goals. When I came back from Austin, I knew what I wanted to do in my future. I wanted to stay in school and go to college and make a real future for myself. This is now my goal, to finish high school and go to college.

When I was in Austin at St. Edward's University, it was just like being back home. We had everything we needed. I was comfortable because there was a lobby where we would gather with friends and watch TV or have meetings.

The money that the State of Texas spends on the migrant program is well spent. If this program continues, I bet we will have more graduates from colleges and universities. It helps students to make decisions and know what to do in the future. This is important for students who think of dropping out or haven't really thought of their future. I think that the program will exist forever with the help of many people who care.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Cipriano may be found at end of hearing.[

Mrs. BOXER. Cipriano, that was excellent. Thank you. Alice Tuck is from Maine.

STATEMENT OF ALICE W. TUCK, YOUTH AMBASSADOR, BELFAST, ME

Ms. TUCK. Hello. I am Alice W. Tuck, and I was born with a hearing loss. We don't know why. As a baby, I went to the Well Child Clinic run by the city of Belfast Nursing Association and the State of Maine Public Health Nursing. There they gave me my shots and checked on my growth.

When I did not start to talk, they told my parents to check my hearing. We went to the F.T. Hill Center in Waterville to find out. My diagnosis was profound sensorineural hearing loss. A wonderful

person there taught my mom about hearing loss and told her about state services.

We applied and I received help from the Crippled Children's Program, a Division of Maternal and Child Health, Department of Human Services. I am not crippled because I can walk and move my body, but I can't hear at all. This program helped me for 5 years. It paid for my hearing testing, my hearing aids and for speech therapy. We went three times a week for speech until I went to school. We went to the University of Maine at Orono for hearing testing and to check my ears. My parents decided to use cued speech, and the people at the state didn't mind.

The public health nurse introduced my mom to a nice man from Social Services, and he helped me to go to the Belfast Area Children's Center. He got assistance for me from the Department of Human Services, a division of Social Services under Title XX, and I was the first person with a handicap to go there.

I learned to play with other kids and sit in a group. This man also made it possible for a home preschool teacher to come to my house. I think the first one came from the Bureau of Mental Retardation.

Then we moved to my house. I got help through Mid-Coast Preschool Services. The teachers helped me to do puzzles, learn about animals, color and made me speak. They helped me so much I was able to go to nursery school. We did cooking, reading and writing. I liked learning with the regular kids.

Every summer since I was four I have gone to a summer program with other children who use cued speech. At first we were funded by Crippled Children's Program. This part is very important as the summer program turned into Cued Speech Family camp. This year was 10 years of camp and the Department of Education and the Bureau of Rehabilitation have given money over the years for camp.

Camp is special. I learn how to talk and cue. My friends are there who are deaf and can cue like me. Now we older ones take care of and watch the little deaf kids. This means we babysit them while their parents meet, learn and talk.

Now I am in the eighth grade in SAD #34 in Crosby Junior High School. I am better than when I was little. Since kindergarten, the school has given me an interpreter who cues, and now the school encourages other kids to cue to me. We have a cued speech club.

The Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation has helped me with a TV captioner. I can watch TV and know what they are talking about, especially during news. The Bureau has also helped me to get a TDD so I can call my friends on the phone and talk to anyone.

Thank you for asking me to come to Washington, DC to be a youth ambassador from Maine. I also want to thank Dr. Cornett and Gallaudet College in Washington, for helping me and my parents learn to cue.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Tuck may be found at end of hearing.]

Mrs. BOXER. Alice, thank you very much. Alice pointed out that she cannot hear at all. With help from the Crippled Children's Pro-

gram, a division of the Child Health Division of the Department of Health and Human Services and through Title XX she is learning to get her education and be a productive part of society. We thank her very much.

This first panel has been so outstanding. To complete it, Aundra Henderson from West Virginia.

STATEMENT OF AUNDRA HENDERSON, YOUTH AMBASSADOR, WEST VIRGINIA

Ms. HENDERSON. Good morning. My name is Aundra Henderson from West Virigina. To me foster care is a program that helps and protects America's youth. Even though foster care has many good points, it also has its bad points. I feel that if placement and adoption were processed more quickly, then the program would have less problems. The program needs more involvement from the people, such as more social workers who care and like what they are doing for other people. The program also needs more foster families who are willing to take any child into their home, no matter what race or age he or she is. Often many problems are caused because of the children brought into foster care. Not all children will be cooperative because of their previous home life.

America's youth has many new choices they can make these days. Without proper guidance the choices these young people will make, will not always be the correct ones, which is one reason why the program is good because it offers the foster child a family, shelter, schooling, clothing, and most of all love which makes a normal home life.

One of the most confusing parts of foster care in sexual abuse cases is that the judicial system is doing very little if anything at all about punishing the offenders. The importance of foster care in sexual abuse cases is that a child raised in a happy family and feeling a part of that family, the child will mature into a responsible adult and not an abusive parent.

When I moved in with my soon to be adopted family, 3½ years ago at age 12, I smoked, I had absolutely no interest in school, I did not use manners or care about my behavior except getting attention in any way I could, and it didn't bother me at all to lie. Now after lots of love, caring, long talks, and discipline, I make honor roll at school, was captain of my school basketball team, now starting my third year, I was in the school choir, I was 6th, 7th, and 8th grade princess, and I was also on the student council. I know now I have a future and have set my goals high because my family now has taught me I can be and do anything if I work hard at it.

I hope that after my high school years that my talent and help from the foster care program, can be included in my college plans. The foster care program has helped many young people. If we all take pride in the program, it will continue to flourish.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Henderson may be found at end of hearing.]

Mrs. BOXER. Thank you.

The three of us up here have decided instead of asking questions to just react to the panel's testimony. I will ask Mr. Goodling to react first and make his comments.

Mr. GOODLING. Anita, I think we ought to tout the Farrell area school district a little. It is the poorest in the State of Pennsylvania, poor in relation to the amount of dollars available, and yet their dropout rate is less than 3 percent, which says something about the innovative and creative programs that school district has developed over the years.

The Job Corps was mentioned. It is near and dear to me. Some of us have had to work very hard to keep it. It is an expensive program but as I remind my colleagues, expensive compared to what. It gives many youngsters the last opportunity to turn things around.

I sit on the Migrant Education Council. There is a picture in my office of migrant education children, signed by all of them, thanking us for what we do to help them have a better chance. Of all the children in the United States, getting an education for them is probably the most difficult.

Alice, your comments were very touching because my oldest sister who is now 72 lost her hearing when she was 3. No one knew why or knows why now. There were no services at that time. But she was fortunate because there was a second grade teacher who taught grades, 2, 3, 4, and 5 who insisted my sister come to school. Because of the efforts of that teacher she has led a very, very productive life and I know that you are going to also. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

Mrs. BOXER. Congressman Kennedy.

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you Chairman Boxer.

I just want to say that I could not be more delighted with the testimony that each and every one of you has provided this Task Force today. You are exactly what I think that the whole Children's Day effort is about, to demonstrate how individuals despite all the terrible statistics we hear these days about how difficult it is to grow up in our county, that with your unique combination of special drive and determination coupled with the programs that I think people like Congressman Goodling and Barbara Boxer and I have tried to advocate here in the Congress, can in fact demonstrate that people can grow into their full human potential.

Each one of you had such a tremendous story. Your own specific capacities and capabilities to overcome the odds I think are an inspiration to everyone, from Aundra's ability to overcome foster care, Anita and Tara's willingness to come to grips with their pregnancy and overcome the problems they would face to Jonathan's willingness to try to help not only himself but other kids in Massachusetts.

I thought Alice's testimony really almost brought a tear to a lot of people's eyes here. In a very concrete way in front of all of us she demonstrates the power of the individual and people's willingness to overcome whatever difficulties they might face in life through their sheer faith in themselves and the human race.

I am delighted with each and every one of you and with all your efforts, and Mr. Nevarez's efforts as well. It should be an inspiration for everyone. Particularly as Mrs. Boxer and Congressman Goodling have pointed out, these are the programs we are struggling for, that are on the chopping block today. We have to reaffirm our commitment to you and others like you.

Thank you very much for your testimony.

Mrs. BOXER. The good news is that you can all stay in the room because everyone now is in the room who would like to be. I want an opportunity as the Chair of this Task Force to thank these witnesses who have gotten this discussion off to such a strong start.

There was a comment made by Aundra in her testimony. She says: "I know now I have a future and have set my goals high because my family now has taught me I can be and do anything I work hard at." Now the point is that each and every one of us can do anything we put our mind to if we believe in ourselves. What you are teaching us here today is that in each of your lives there was something that suddenly made you believe in yourselves. For some of you it was your family, for some it was a program at school. For one it was the Job Corps, the Migrant Program, the Crippled Childrens' Program, and for Jonathan it was an opportunity to give back something he wanted to give back.

That is the lesson I think Congress needs to understand. Not everybody gets that support. We need to make sure that we put tax dollars behind those kinds of programs that work, that reach out and give you that sense that you can make it and do it and participate. Then we will have the strongest country in the world. No one can stop this country from greatness, because what makes us great is our people.

So I am very lifted by this panel. As I go to this discussion about budget priorities you will be right here in front of my mind. I want to again thank my dear friend, Joe Kennedy. He is certainly an inspiration to us all by teaching us that it is the children who have the message we need to hear.

I am very pleased to turn the gavel over to my good friend, Congressman Goodling who has a heart bigger than this room. He will lead us in the rest of this hearings. Also my thanks to each and every one of you and to Whitney Houston who had to leave, again, I want to thank her for giving us the inspiration. Thank you very much.

Mr. GOODLING [presiding]. Congresswoman Boxer will now go for her arm exercises in a different setting than I had this morning. I would like to call the next panel to the table at this time and thank and dismiss the first panel.

The second panel is composed of Melisa Garcia from Arizona; Calvester Torrence from Wisconsin; Phallay Chhay from Virginia; Natasha Smith from Alaska; Shawn Lawson from Arkansas; and Stephanie Leming from Kentucky.

At this time we welcome the second panel. We will ask you to testify in the order I call you. Melisa Garcia from Arizona will be first.

STATEMENT OF MELISA GARCIA, YOUTH AMBASSADOR, TUCSON, AZ

Ms. GARCIA. My name is Melisa Garcia from Tucson, AZ, I am a 16-year-old mother with a 14-month-old son. I represent the Center for Adolescent Parents, a program for child care. The program is free for us. Our program consists of different areas empowering us in all parts of life.

We have a step program, systematic training for effective parenting which helps in areas like socialization, language, infant stimulation and self help parenting skills. Another important part is studying for the GED program. We have one on one counseling with the GED instructor who sets up an individualized program of study. There are also two volunteers who help us with any problems in our GED work.

We spend 9 hours a week on this part of the program. Once a week we have career counseling with one of the staff who specializes in this area. She teaches different career skills like job interviewing and writing resumes.

If we are interested in a particular career and would like to know more about it, our counselor will bring in a speaker to talk about that career. Every Tuesday we have "time and talk." This is our time to discuss problems associated with husbands, boyfriends and family members. We talk about anything we need to discuss. It is very confidential. We laugh, cry, give and get advice from the other girls. It is a warm caring time to share with others.

This program is successful for many reasons, one is that we have a multilevel curriculum, not only do we stud for GED exam but we learn skills for all parts of life, children, marriage, careers. We learn from geometry to good parenting. This program is multicultural. The clients represent Hispanic, Native American, African American and Anglo communities of Tucson. As we grow together we also learn respect for and understand of each other's culture.

Finally, and most important, is the staff. We are taught by caring professionals who are always supportive and positive. Thanks to their help I have grown in maturity enough to be accepted in college and received a scholarship. I need to mention our caregivers in our free nursery who take excellent care of our children while we study. It helps not to have to worry about my son because I know he is safe.

I feel very lucky to have found and participated in such a program as the Center for Adolescent Parents. It has helped me find direction in my life and then given me the skills to go and achieve my goals.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Gacia may be found at end of hearing.]

Mr. GOODLING. Congressman Espy has joined us. He is on the Education and Labor Committee. Is there anything you would like to say at this time?

Mr. ESPY. Mr. Chairman, let me apologize for being late. As you know, we have a big budget vote today. There are all kinds of caucuses and canvases and groups whose arms are being twisted all over this place.

Let me say I appreciate the theme of this particular conference. I have a long statement. I would like to ask unanimous consent to have the bulk of it entered into the record, I would appreciate it. We do have a budget problem but I cannot think of any higher item in our Nation's priorities than the care of our youth and the care of our children. Mr. Chairman, we have a lot of problems with children in Mississippi. I come from a State that is making great progress in the care and development of children.

Still, I am ashamed that we have a tremendous infant mortality rate. Out of every 1,000 live births 6 will not live to blow out a candle on their first birthday cake. I have given many high school graduation speeches, as I am sure you have, but I am not proud that out of 6,600 students, 100 dropped out. I am not proud of the fact that so many young girls have babies and they don't want to come back to the classes.

I cannot think of a higher item in this list of budget priorities than to take care of our children. That is the theme today. I am glad to be here to cooperate in this vital issue.

Mr. KENNEDY. I want to let the gentleman from Mississippi know that there was a wonderful woman who testified in the previous panel named Donna Washington. I am told she is one of your constituents.

Mr. ESPY. I met her in the hall. I am really sorry I missed her testimony. I also missed Ms. Whitney Houston. I want to be named as an original cosponsor on this bill and I congratulate all the work that you have done.

Mr. KENNEDY. Thank you very much.

Mr. GOODLING. You are really learning about arm twisting up here today. You heard about arm twisting up here, downtown and many other places.

I ask unanimous consent for all the essays for those who have not had an opportunity to testify to be included in the record. Without objection it is so ordered. For all of you who brought your essays, they will be included in the hearing record. We appreciate your coming.

Our next witness is Calvester Torrence.

STATEMENT OF CALVESTER TORRENCE, YOUTH AMBASSADOR, MILWAUKEE, WI

Mr. TORRENCE. Two years ago I was in the seventh grade and in big trouble. Luckily I joined the One on One Program and now I have a bright future. I started the ninth grade in Nicolet High School. One on One was created by a private sector group of civic, business and education leaders.

The program began to improve study habits, academic achievement and offer help from the business community. It is called One on One because it matches one student with one mentor. I originally joined the One on One Program because it had afterschool activities and I like to play basketball. I needed help with my grades. My report card said my behavior was not acceptable and I could do better.

I realize my hopes for the future depend on a good education and good behavior. After 18 months in the program I learned how to keep out of trouble and avoid places that are bad for me. To avoid those places I play basketball, spend time with my mentor and work on getting good grades.

My last report card also showed my behavior has improved and now I can control my temper. I have had the opportunity to speak out about the One on One Program and what it can do for Milwaukee students. I was the subject of a TV interview program with my mentors. I also gave a speech to the Greater Milwaukee Commit-

tee. This program has helped me to realize the value of education now and I am headed in the right direction. I am proud of myself for turning my life around.

My future looks bright. After high school I plan to go to the University of Wisconsin in Madison. I hope other kids will have the opportunities I have had. Someday I hope I can help kids in the seventh grade who are in trouble. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Torrence may be found at end of hearing.]

Mr. GOODLING. We will now hear from Phally Chhay.

STATEMENT OF PHALLY CHHAY, YOUTH AMBASSADOR, RICHMOND, VA

Mr. CHHAY. Hello. My name is Phallay Chhay. I am a 19-year-old Cambodian refugee. I am going into the 12th grade at Meadowbrook High School in Richmond, VA. I have been a member of a program calied the Refugee Youth Training Project, which was a Federal demonstration project that lasted for 2 years. The program was made possible from a grant though the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Social Services, to the Office of Refugee Resettlement of the Catholic Diocese of Richmond. Sixty refugee teenagers were asked to join the project because our teachers thought that we were going to drop out of school and this project helped us stay in school.

We each belonged to a small group and each group had an adult leader. Each group chose a topic about our culture to research, then we wrote about it and we also wrote stories about our lives. At the end we put it all together in a book. This year my group wrote about how to make a Cambodian house. We also learned how to take pictures and how to develop them. We made all of the photographs that are in the book. There is also a lot of artwork. With the book, we helped to bring alive our culture and memories.

Refugee kids have many problems here, like how to get along with Americans. There are a lot of problems with the students in my school, especially the city schools. There are prejudiced kids who are against us living in the United States and they call us names like, "chinks" and "yellow monkeys." And we sometimes fight them. Some of us were in gangs before we joined this project. Another problem is that our parents want us to be like old Cambodians and we want to be like Americans. And we argue with them too. Two times I ran away. I can't get along with my stepmother, I worry a lot about my real mother who is still in Cambodia. I follow along with my friends most of the time and that is why I belonged to a gang, to be cool and to be part of a group. School is okay, but I used to skip a lot because I didn't feel like doing any work. Another problem with the Cambodian parents is that they want to pick who we will marry, but we want to date and pick our own mate. Some kids in our project had run away to be with their boyfriend or girlfriend. Some kids said they wanted to commit suicide.

When I was in the project it helped me stay out of trouble because I spent time with my group and I wasn't going out with my other friends and doing what I don't want to do. In the project I learned many new things. Some people, like the editor from the

newspaper talked to us about how to interview and a photographer took us to his studio and helped us take pictures of Cambodian clothes. I also went to school almost always because our leaders always checked to see if we were going and if we were making good grades. And some kids got tutors. We also went on many field trips, I made lots of new friends. I have better grammar too, because I practiced writing for the book.

When we interviewed the old people, it made them feel good that we were interested in our culture. Some kids only talk to their parents when they want something but now they talk more and the parents seem to be proud of their kids when they write about their customs for Americans to read. Also, the parents liked their pictures in the book. But I don't know about me and my parents because I don't live with them any more.

I think all the kids in the project feel better about themselves now because we are not ashamed of who we are. Once we went to the Richmond Children's Museum and we had a fashion show for the American kids there and we taught them how to play Cambodian games and the Vietnamese kids cooked food for them. We were all very proud when people told us that they like our clothes, food, and games.

Now we feel like we belong more. I know that some people all over the world are prejudiced, but it is not 100 percent. I talked with friends and classmates who feel the same way I do and we share each other's cultures.

More than anything, I think this project has helped me to let out all the pain that is inside me. Both years I wrote stories and poems about the war, about my angry feelings, tragedy, and suffering. In the project, we could talk about problems at home and school and the other kids and adults understood how it feels. I have nothing to hide now. I talk very open.

I am sorry that this project is over because there is no more money. While we were in the project, nobody dropped out of school but now a few have dropped out already, three have been suspended, and five have run away. I ask you what is the difference whether kids die in the streets of this country or in other countries at war.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Chhay may be found at end of hearing,]

Mr. GOODLING. Natasha Smith from Alaska. You are a long way from home.

STATEMENT OF NATASHA SMITH, YOUTH AMBASSADOR, ANCHORAGE, AK

Ms. SMITH. Hi. My name is Natasha Smith and I am 12 years old and in the sixth grade at Northwood School in Anchorage, AK. I would like to share you about what Very Special Arts means to me.

I have been going to the Very Special Arts Festival since I was 3 years old. In 1991 when I attend the festival it will be 10 years. I like the puppet shows and the music the best.

Last year at my school my class had an artist from the Very Special Arts Festival and she let my class do clay pottery. Then she let us put it on display during the festival.

I go to the New Visions Dance class and all the kids with special needs have lots of fun. They teach us how to move and how to dance like professional dancers.

The Very Special Arts Festival and New Visions Dance class let children with special needs, like me, participate in the arts. It makes us feel good about ourselves because we can be a part of the arts. It doesn't matter what kind of disability we have, we can still enjoy ourselves.

Thank you for listening and thank you for inviting me to come to Washington, DC for National Children's Day.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Smith may be found at end of hearing.]

Mr. GOODLING. Thank you Natasha for coming to share your story with us.

STATEMENT OF SHAWN LAWSON, YOUTH AMBASSADOR, ARKANSAS

Mr. LAWSON. Hello, my name is Shawn Lawson. I am a senior at Malvern High School where I am student body president. Out of all the programs I am associated with, peer counseling is the most significant. The Malvern Public Schools Peer Counselor Program has been active since 1974 when school authorities requested a teen involvement program be started in the Malvern school system.

These counselors are carefully screened, drug free, have satisfactory grades and are well rounded students with a determination to defeat the drug problem.

To negate the idea everyone uses drugs, peer counselors serve as positive role models for the younger students to promote the drug free messages.

Peer counselors receive approximately 32 hours of training by attending the Governor's Youth Conference in the summer, attending REACH training and monthly training sessions by the high school drug coordinator, Wanda Williams. The 120 peer counselors from grades 8 through 12 are assigned to elementary classes where they present monthly class sessions for students, kindergarten through sixth grade. In these visits, the counselors try to create lines of communication so the students will feel open to ask questions freely. The counselors also play decisionmaking games and activities that demonstrate the importance of individual values, sound decisions and positive self-esteem. Factual drug information is also presented in a nonemotional manner and activities for a drug free lifestyle are offered.

Since drug use is beginning at much younger ages, the counselor try to encourage decisions of nondrug use before these youth are pressured by their peers to use drugs.

Drug use is not the only factor the peer counseling group focuses on. The counselors confront many different problems of youth today, such as, suicide, teen pregnancy, and family problems.

What makes our program truly successful is dedicated leaders and the youth. The student leadership in all youth programs is the

key to the success. The elementary kids listen more attentively to the peers around their own age and older. This awesome combination is what makes Malvern Peer Counselors an excellent program. The Malvern program has received both State and national recognition as a model peer support group.

By carefully considering their role as a model, making a commitment, and participating in the program, it is felt that high school students' own position is reinforced. The attempts to guide the younger students in life coping skills and goal setting makes their own values and goals become clearer.

Having a love for children, this was an excellent opportunity for me when I was chosen as a peer counselor. I have a feeling of satisfaction knowing that I have made a difference in someone's life. The children look up to us and respect us. Being involved in this program has been a plus in my life and has reinforced my values as a person.

From the Malvern Peer Counselor Program, I would like to thank you for your time and this opportunity.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Lawson may be found at end of hearing.]

Mr. GOODLING. Thank you, Shawn. The last person who will testify on this panel is Stephanie Leming from Kentucky.

STATEMENT OF STEPHANIE LEMING, YOUTH AMBASSADOR, OWENSBORO, KY

Ms. LEMING. Hello, my name is Stephanie Leming. I am representing Owensboro, KY.

During the course of a person's life, he will find that he needs comfort and support from people to live a happy and normal life. Many people can get that support from family members. There are, however, less fortunate people without living family members or whose family is not supportive and comforting enough to provide encouragement.

For several years my older brother and I were abused by our natural mother. We had to steal things for a living and led pitiful, degraded lives. After so much abuse, my brother left our home and entered a children's home. My other siblings and I were not as fortunate. Because my mother was wanted for several different offenses, we began moving from state to state. From Florida and the Carolinas to Nevada, we moved every few weeks, living each day on the money that churches were kind enough to donate to us and items that were stolen. Throughout this time, I tried to take care of my brother and sister without the help of our mother, who was usually intoxicated.

In 1985 we returned to Kentucky because my grandmother was ill. In December 1985 the department for social services intervened and my brother, sister and I were placed in a foster home. Since that time my life has made a total turnabout.

Now things are better than ever. Foster care has become a very important part of my life. Thanks to my new foster family, I am happier than I thought possible. In school, my grade point average is 3.8, and I am in the gifted-talented program, and an active member of the national honor society. Already I have begun

making plans for college and I have grand opportunities waiting for me. I am involved in clubs and activities in which only select individuals can participate. Thanks to the Foster Teens Conference, I have close friends throughout Kentucky with whom I exchange letters regularly. At church I am an active member in my youth group. After being baptized this year, I have a joy in me that would have been inconceivable to me before this year.

Foster teens have more difficulty receiving comfort from family. Foster care workers realize this, and have found a way for foster teens to receive support. The foster care system sponsors the Foster Teens Conference, giving teenagers in foster care the opportunity to fellowship with peers in similar family situations. At this conference, foster teens have the opportunity to have fun, talk about themselves, and form lasting friendships with foster teens across the State. This provides the teenagers with social skills that will be beneficial to them throughout their lifetime.

The Foster Teens Conference also provides training sessions offering foster teens guidance in independent living. When a child leaves foster care, he is on his own the rest of the way. The independent living classes show older children the aspects of life they will be facing including work skills, communication, and other skills vital to living independently.

Another program designed to benefit foster teens is the Mentor Program, which is spreading throughout Kentucky. Offering a one-on-one relationship with a volunteer from the teen's area, this program helps the teen prepare for independent living while providing a supportive friend who will be around to help even after the teen leaves foster care. The mentor is a selected person qualified to take teens step by step through some of the obstacles involved in independent living, while giving the teen advice and consultation. This lifelong friendship and guidance, which closely resembles a relationship with an older brother or sister, is a significant addition to a foster teen's life.

With help from my foster parents and other people who care, I am on my way to living independently. With scholarships I earn and money provided by the State, I will be attending college after next year. My foster parents are working with me on budgeting my money and maintaining a checking account, which are two vital aspects of independent living. Also, the Independent Living Program will help me with other equally important skills.

Although life has been somewhat rough throughout the years, I have been able to rise to the top. I pray that I can share my story with children that are in the same situation that I was in and show them that there are programs offered to fill their needs and give them hope for the future. With a little help and happiness, children everywhere can be all that they dream of being. All they need is that special touch supplied by people who care.

Thank you, Chairwoman Boxer and I appreciate your time, Budget Committee.

Also, on behalf of the youth of Kentucky and the other states represented here, I would like to thank Congressman Kennedy for letting our voices be heard.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Leming may be found at end of hearing.]

Mr. GOODLING. This was an outstanding panel. I was thinking we should find some way to take this program on the road. We sometimes read so much about such jealous and self interested people. When we hear your stories of sharing with each other and encouraging each other, it is really heart warming. I think it would be well for the entire United States to hear your stories.

I would like to call your attention to a little program we have going here on the Hill. As congressional offices, we have established sort of parent program, we call it a mentor program. We work with the District of Columbia Schools. In our case we have a young man in this office, and this is our second year that he has been with us. He was heading very much in the wrong direction as a seventh grader. As an eighth grader he became a part of our office, part of our family. We go to the games of the Baltimore Orioles, the Bullets, and the Capitals. We go to recreation parks together. We have big parties when it is report card day because when Lydell does well, and he has been doing very well, we have a big party. It has been a wonderful experience for those in my office.

They do a great job as mentors for Lydell. He is now in the ninth grade. I was teaching him yesterday, he is in Latin. I told him with all those pretty girls in your class you better learn. Amo, amas, amat.

Again, we thank all of you from the panel. I will turn the the gavel over now to the Congressman who was the most responsible for this opportunity to have you come and share with us. I must now take my twisted arms out and see if I can twist some arms myself because if we get sequestration the programs that will really get slaughtered will be the ones that come from Congressman Espy's and my committee, the education and nutrition programs. So I will do almost anything to prevent sequestration from happening, even though it might mean I have to hold my nose, close my eyes, close my ears from my constituents, to see if we can come up with some way to prevent sequestration from happening.

It is now my opportunity to turn the gavel over to the Congressman most responsible for today's activities and I thank all of you for coming.

Mr. KENNEDY [presiding]. Congressman Espy, do you have some words for the panel?

Mr. ESPY. I want to just thank them for participating. I am also persuaded that we hear that students of the day are apathetic and don't care what is happening. I think Mr. Goodling is right, we need to take this show on the road to convince other Americans that you are alert and very bright and you are committed to your peers and to this country. It has been a delight for me to sit here and listen to this great testimony.

Mr. KENNEDY. Again, I just want to say how delighted I am with the testimony each and every one of you has given, from youth leaders such as Shawn to those of you who have overcome the difficulties of foster care and Natasha's ability to overcome her disabilities. Calvester, when you talk about being a troublemaker in the seventh grade you hit a chord from my memories from my seventh grade days as well.

You are all a tremendous example to other young people around the country and people in the Congress as well. You hear about people up here joking about getting our arms twisted. What we are talking about are programs like those that have helped you that are on the chopping block today. We have to make sure that the Congress is willing to stand up and hear the kind of testimony and inspiration that you give us so that you can have the backbone that is necessary to not succumb to the wishes of a few but rather to stand up for those programs that will allow others like you to grow to your full human potential as well.

You are tremendous individuals. You have already made a difference in your young lives in this country. I want you to know that you really count in this country and in Washington but most importantly in your own home towns. Thank you all for coming.

We will now excuse the second panel and bring up panel three.

Panel three is made up of several individuals, Michelle Hamby from South Carolina; Tyrell Gales, Massachusetts; Lashawn Brown, Alabama; Michael Briggs, Oregon; Mary Jo Blanchard from Connecticut; Maria Dawn Durbec from Hawaii; and JoEllen Deters from Kansas.

First, I want to just take one minute to recognize one of the people who has been truly responsible for the establishment of National Children's Day. That is the president of the National PTA and a good friend of mine, Ann Lynch and is a hostess of the congressional lunch that will follow the hearing.

We want to thank you for all the work that you have done and the work you continue to do on behalf of our Nation's young people. Thank you very much.

Now we get to the third and again the important part of this hearing which is the testimony from our youth ambassadors. We want to start off panel three with Michelle Hamby from North Carolina.

STATEMENT OF MICHELLE HAMBY, YOUTH AMBASSADOR, GREENVILLE, SC

Ms. HAMBY. My name is Michelle Hamby from Greenville, SC. Panel three wants to thank Chairwoman Boxer, Mr. Goodling and Congressman Kennedy.

Right now I am a 16-year-old girl starting my sophomore year in a new high school. This past summer I moved back home to live with my mama and her boyfriend. For the past 3 years I have lived with my aunt, been in a foster home with other teenage girls, lived in a group home and stayed at an emergency shelter. Several times I have run away from school and from homes where the Department of Social Services sent me. I have done some things when I was mean and angry and when I had a wild streak in me that I am not very proud of. I wish I hadn't done those things but I sure learned a lot.

When I was 13 my mama's boyfriend sexually abused me. When I told my mama what had happened she didn't believe me. Later I told my friend about what happened to me and my friend told her parents. After some time a report was made to the department of social services and someone came to school and I had to tell about

what happened to me. I was taken to the law enforcement center to make a statement and then brought to my aunt's home. I had been abused and all the time it hurt so much because I loved my mama and she didn't believe me.

When I was living at my aunt's home I remember Judy, my guardian ad litem coming to visit me. Judy listened to me and she seemed to understand how I felt. Judy didn't care about my past. She just talked to me about what I thought was important and what I wanted to talk about. I didn't have to go to court but I knew Judy was in court looking for what was best for me.

There were times when my foster parents or a counselor would tell me Judy had called but those days we didn't talk much, because I ran away so many times. I have had many people looking out for me these past years, but there were so many times when I wished all those people would get out of my life. Kit and Ann, two of my caseworkers, helped me through some times when I needed them. Because all of these people helped me, I got into groups like Young Life and I had the chance to go to summer camps and Disney World. One spring I even got to go to the beach.

Once when I ran I got myself into trouble with the law and then I did have to go to court. Boy, was I scared. I got 6 months probation and 25 hours of community service. At that time no one could help me because I just wasn't willing to help myself.

Finally I was placed in a group home with some of my friends and an understanding counselor. I have had lots of counseling and so has my mama and her boyfriend. I have learned to forgive and so has my family and this summer things were pretty good. Now I think I am home for good.

My sisters and brothers have gotten into trouble, been on drugs and were sent to jail. I don't know what is going to happen to me but maybe I will be a cosmetologist, a nurse or work with troubled teens. Right now I plan to finish high school and go to vocational school next year. Anyway, I want to do something where I can help people or do something that matters. Some day I would like to see if I could either volunteer or work at a girls home to help other teens with their problems.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Hamby may be found at end of hearing.]

Mr. KENNEDY. Michelle, that was excellent testimony. Thank you very much for coming. We will now hear from Tyrell Gales from Massachusetts.

STATEMENT OF TYRELL GALES, YOUTH AMBASSADOR, DORCHESTER, MA

Mr. GALES. Hello my name is Tyrell Gales from the JFK Library Corps.

Unfortunately young people in our country are often viewed by adults as having little to contribute to society. Media portrays teens as rude, underachievers, drug users, and gang members. It seems like they are more interested in reporting sensational stories than in actually examining the truth and complexities of problems. As a result many people, especially teenage males, are being hurt and stereotyped.

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Today, more than ever, urban youth need to be sincerely respected. We need space and resources to develop productive programs and we need access to the media and to decision makers. Fortunately there are programs that are attempting to do this and who could serve as models for new projects.

The JFK Library Corps is a program that takes kids seriously and has confidence that young people are capable of being responsible and caring. It provides youth with an alternative to hanging out in the streets by encouraging them to do community service projects and providing the tools to get a job done.

Established by the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation in December 1985, the Corps includes Boston students from grades 6 through 12 who live in a cross section of Boston neighborhoods. In 1990, 124 young people volunteered over 17,000 hours to Corps sponsored community projects. Corps activities include working with the elderly, preschoolers, the hungry, and homeless children with special needs and many others. I have enclosed a 1990 project list.

The program asks kids what they think and how they would deal with city problems. In developing projects, Corps members learn firsthand how government works and what they can do to bring about change.

Over the last 4 years, the JFK Library Corps has provided a nurturing environment for me to grow in many different ways. I have developed a respect for people of different races, ages, neighborhoods, and backgrounds. I have become more hesitant to make judgments about others based on the way they look or where they live.

Before I joined the Corps I was always afraid to be in the spotlight. Throughout my years as a member I have developed the confidence in myself to speak out to individuals and at large gatherings about issues that concern me.

I would be very honored to represent the JFK Library Corps and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in Washington, DC at the 1990 National Children's Day Conference. I am anxious to share my views and experiences on how others could create programs that develop self-respect and confidence in young people.

As I end this speech, I would like to urge all of you to allocate funds for the program. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Gales may be found at end of hearing.]

Mr. KENNEDY. Now we will hear from Lashawn Brown of Alabama.

STATEMENT OF LASHAWN BROWN, YOUTH AMBASSADOR, ALABAMA

Ms. BROWN. Hello. I am Lashawn Brown. I am representing the Young Mothers' Program.

During my pregnancy, I was ashamed because society severely criticizes teen pregnancy. I did not want to go anywhere and when I did get out, I felt as if eyes were following me. I reached the point that I hated myself. My peers looked at me strangely. Many of the relationships that I had with my friends changed when they

learned that I was pregnant. My teachers were either unsympathetic to the stresses I was experiencing or lacked the ability to reach out and help me.

Before I learned about the Young Mothers' Program at Ensley High School, I was sure that I would have to drop out of school. Since my family receives welfare, and there were already five children in the family, I could not afford child care for my baby. My baby's father had denied paternity. Even though I eventually went through the court system to establish paternity, I have currently received only one child support check. He is reported to be residing in another state now.

The Young Mothers' Program accepted my daughter, Tina, into their Infant Care Center so that I could continue my education. The principal, Mr. Warren, bought my bus pass which enabled Tina and me to get to school. In the sunshine of late summer, the rain of fall, the cold of winter and again in the spring, we rode the bus together to school. The trip was often difficult because we had to get out of bed at 5:30 a.m., catch the bus, and transfer buses downtown to get to school.

In June of this year, I graduated with a 4.0 GPA. I could not have done it without the Young Mothers' Program because I had no one else to turn to for help. Looking back on that experience, I don't see how I actually did it. But the program had so many encouraging faces and helping hands. The nurse, Ms. Johnson, at their teen self-help clinic monitored my postpartum progress, and checked on Tina when she became ill at school. The counselor, Mrs. Buford, kept me on track toward graduation. She also helped me deal with my emotional roller-coaster.

Students in the Infant Care Training Center along with Mrs. Hall, its director, held Tina for the first 8 weeks because she screamed without close body contact. Many of Mom's friends were telling me to just let her cry or she would be spoiled. But Mrs. Hall knew that Tina had an immature nervous system that just needed time to develop.

What a warm, comforting start she had in life instead of a fearful, frustrating one. Today she is a very independent and, I might add, very bright 1-year-old who is busy exploring her world from 2 feet high.

The program has impacted my life in so many ways. It has heightened my courage and self-esteem. It has shown me that patience and perseverance pay off. It has instilled in me the determination to go on and complete my career goals in spite of the fact that it will be much harder with a child.

Thanks to the unwavering help from Ms. McDonald, the program coordinator, I am now a full-time freshman at Birmingham-Southern College under a Ford Foundation grant, with a double major, education and biology. They have also helped me to obtain free child care for Tina at a day care center near the college inspite of the Alabama Department of Human Resources' regulations restricting child care slots to 2-year, postsecondary students. Ms. McDonald's call to the Governor's office was needed to intervene.

The future for Tina and me looks bright now. We hope to find alternate housing soon which will take us out of the projects. I am

working very hard to make the dean's list, and Tina already has a Birmingham-Southern T-shirt.

I love the program. It will be a significant part of my life forever. Someday I will return the favor.

I would like to thank Congressman Kennedy, the members of the Budget Committee and everyone for listening to me.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Brown may be found at end of hearing.]

Mr. KENNEDY. You all do such a nice job of inspiring all of us and helping out one another. It is terrific to see. Next is Michael Briggs from Oregon.

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL BRIGGS, YOUTH AMBASSADOR, OREGON

Mr. BRIGGS. My story is an exceptionally different one. Troubles started early in life for me. My father left my mother and me when I was 2, leaving us with nothing. She remarried a successful businessman when I was 5, and that is when problems really started.

I was continually sexually abused by my babysitters, and my stepfather didn't help matters any. I was beaten by him almost daily, and from an early age I was told I was unwanted. My real father wouldn't have anything to do with me, and I felt worthless and very alone. I used to sit in my room shaking and crying because I felt so unloved and scared. I thought all hope was lost.

By the time I was 9 I was thinking about suicide. My mother saw that I had become very withdrawn and aggressive with my own schoolmates and at home, so we left my stepfather. We left him several times. Only each time he would come back with his promises and vows to change. A few days would go by and the destructive cycle would start all over again.

When I got into middle school I started experimenting with drugs. I was looking for a way out; an escape route from reality. I got into alcohol, marijuana, and LSD. Within 2 months I was in deep. My grades and life continued to plummet until I hit rock bottom. I have a long history of alcoholism in my family and being a quarter Native American didn't help me. Of most American Indians, 65 percent are either alcoholics or drug addicts. So from the beginning the odds were against me.

Toward the end of my drug usage I had attempted suicide on many occasions. I was a very angry person. I was withdrawn from life and I failed to see the damage I was doing to myself.

At the end of my eighth grade year, I was admitted for treatment at Sacred Heart Adolescent Recovery Program, SHARP. I know my life was as bad as it was going to get and the only way now was up. I had no self-worth and I hated life. With a lot of help from the staff and my mom, I put an end to the destruction. I tore down those walls and began to grow. I learned what drugs did to me and how scary they really are.

SHARP taught me skills on how to regain my self-confidence and strengthen, both physically and mentally. They taught me how to be comfortable with who I am. They also showed me my abilities and potential that I thought I never had before. I learned responsibility, how to make new friends, and best of all love—love for

myself. They told me that before I could love others I had to first love myself.

At the end of treatment I was frightened. I felt so safe and secure and I was afraid that I couldn't move on with my life. I was afraid that I wasn't strong enough.

I started to get back in touch with my heritage and I learned how to channel my feelings and express myself with art. I now do beadwork, jewelry making, leather craft, and my favorite, painting. After a while I began to share my art work with others. It makes me feel good to show them and see them smile and be happy. I want to be a positive influence on their lives.

Little by little my life has fallen into shape. I now enjoy school and earn a 3.00 average. With my talents I have earned my way into two different universities, the University of Oregon and Santa Fe School of Art, which is strictly for Native American artists. I plan on devoting my life to people and helping them. I want to become an art teacher and use art as a type of therapy for troubled teenagers like myself.

There is a saying that I strongly believe in and that is, "God's gift to you is ability, and your gift to God is what you do with that ability." I truly believe that. SHARP has helped me to learn these things and I am going to use my skills and abilities to take myself straight to the top. I hope I can be a positive influence for others and let them know there still is hope. You have just got to want it bad enough and most importantly, you need to believe in yourself.

Also, I have given you all a poster. This is a friend of mine who committed suicide in January. He died of a cocaine overdose. I would be honored if you would hang that somewhere in your office where it could be seen. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Briggs may be found at end of hearing.]

Mr. KENNEDY. Again, that was an excellent job, Michael. Not only will I hang the poster in my office, but we are also submitting it for the official record of this hearing. Next, we hear from Mary Jo Blanchard from Connecticut.

STATEMENT OF MARY JO BLANCHARD, YOUTH AMBASSADOR, EAST HARTFORD, CT

Ms. BLANCHARD. Hello, my name is Mary Jo Blanchard. I am 16 years old and live in East Hartford, CT. I represent an organization that is based in the town of Hartford.

The members of Common Ground are high school students in their sophomore and junior years. All of us live in the Greater Hartford area and surrounding towns. Many of us come from different backgrounds and ethnic groups, so we tend to make quite an unusual grouping of young students. However, we consider this one of our greatest qualities, not a fault.

Many people ask me what exactly Common Ground is. They get confused that it is a leadership group yet the members are not required to have proven their ability. This is a program for developing potential, individually and as a group. With the help of Ellen Smith-Bigelow, Janis Abroms, and all of the liaisons from the different schools this is possible and indeed successful.

When looking back on my semester of training for Common Ground I find that it is the "weekend" that stands out. And had only been the second time the whole group was together and just about everybody was a stranger.

But by the end of the retreat at Camp Jewel a miracle had occurred; in 2 short days we had become family. We had also learned to cope with each other, overcome obstacles, and reach a common goal. We had stopped stereotyping and judging each other and just accepted everybody for who we were inside. The barriers of prejudice had fallen. The atmosphere that weekend was like nothing I had ever experienced, it was harmonious and peaceful.

After our weekend together we put our newly improved skills to work and began to discuss issues. Since we were such a varied group many people had different concerns and we covered them all. We would talk for hours about issues such as freedom, peace, apartheid, abortion, drug abuse, the environment, and what could be done to solve these problems. We would also discuss issues that hit a little closer to home, such as teenage pregnancy, drug problems in our schools, dropouts, student rights, censorship, and the homeless situation.

Unfortunately, we didn't figure out anything that would eliminate any of these problems. However, we didn't give up doing what little we could. Some people see injustices in the world and continue to walk on by, pretending not to see and hoping it will go away on its own. We choose to stop and offer a hand and try to change the world for the better. That is a common ground we all share. We try to accomplish this through volunteer work and community service. We have received so much, now is our turn to start giving back.

I am sure that there are many groups similar in construction to Common Ground. Perhaps they are not as successful and one might ask, What makes this group so special? or Why does it work so well? I would answer these questions quite easily. It is due to the people in Common Ground. Everybody gets involved. There is so much enthusiasm and optimism you can't help but take it back with you to your school and all the other parts of your life.

I consider myself an average example of how we bring it back with us. Here are a few things I have done since Common Ground. I was concerned about the way people deal with each other, so I joined our school's Human Relations Council. Since than I have become cochairperson of the council and have worked on projects such as Black History Month and Cultural Awareness Day.

I also noticed a need for a club where students who enjoy community service could get together and volunteer. I founded what we now call Service Club and have been elected the president. We have worked on many projects through this club; recycling, tree planting, soup kitchens, the Special Olympics, the Cancer Foundation, and Amnesty International are just a few examples. Currently we are working on forming a Project Literacy U.S. chapter in our town.

I am also an active member of the student council. Through this group I took part in throwing a senior prom for all of the senior citizens of our town. It was a huge success and will be around for years to come. I have also been working on simulating the Common

Ground weekend for a student council retreat at the beginning of the school year.

Another group that I am involved with is the East Hartford Youth Advisory Board. Through this I have expanded to work on branches of Youth Services such as safe rides, peer advocates, and latchkey kids.

Common Ground taught me to consider the world around me and to do what I can to make it better. It is evident through my actions, as well as other members, that we have taken this to heart and plan on reaching this goal. This is why Common Ground is as successful as it is. I am very proud that I had the privilege to be part of it.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Blanchard may be found at end of hearing.]

Mr. KENNEDY. Mary Jo, that was excellent testimony.

You have heard a few buzzers, bells, and whistles going off here. The fact is we have got a vote on right at the moment. I am going to run over and vote on the House Floor and then come right back. If Maria and JoEllen don't mind waiting for 10 or 15 minutes, I will get back to you as soon as possible.

Thank you all very much.

[After recess.]

Mr. KENNEDY. The Task Force will come to order.

I want to take one minute to introduce a fellow who was a chairman of the Human Services Committee from the State of Hawaii. He is in the house of representatives from that state. Let's give a big hand to Dennis Arakaki.

[Applause.]

Mr. ARAKAKI. Thank you. I know we have probably come the farthest of all the delegation.

I think when people talk about Hawaii, they think about paradise. I want to tell you that the kids in Hawaii are no different than the kids in the rest of the Nation. We also have our problems. I just want to say that we in Hawaii would like to see our children and our kids become our priority both nationally and in all our States. .

At this time we hear a lot of rhetoric about how important our kids are. I think it is time that we see those ideas put into action. We want to see our kids important and priority in our budgets as well.

I want to thank all of you for being here to help express that to our leaders. Thank you very much.

I would like to introduce our delegation. We have the next young lady who will be testifying, Maria Durbec. We have Catherine Garcia, Sonny Pham, Ronald Puckett and our two chaperones, Laverne Bishop and also Joe Factor.

Mr. KENNEDY. Maria, after all of that, we are now going to hear from you.

STATEMENT OF MARIA DAWN DURBEC, YOUTH AMBASSADOR, HAWAII

Ms. DURBEC. Aloha. My name is Maria Durbec. As you know, I am from Hawaii.

Hawaii Youth At Risk is a program that helps troubled youth to look at their lives and take responsibility for it. It provides youth with a structure to be more productive. Participating in this program gives youth a chance to really share about what really is going on in their lives in order to deal with our problems. It is a program where you have to deal with whatever was going on with you right away.

In the 10-day course part of the program, 57 spent 10 days together with staff and volunteers in an isolated camp away from things that could distract them. It was a place where we could really trust each other and follow rules for our lives.

With the help of the adult volunteers and staff, we learned how to work out problems in good ways instead of fighting or with anger. It was like you didn't get to procrastinate, you just worked it out. The adult volunteers really supported the youth and made it safe for us to face the troubles we had. It wasn't just talk; they really supported us.

We learned how to work together to help one another in the course-room sessions, group exercises, running exercises and a ropes course. By the end of the 10 days, it was like we were a big family and we learned that we can make something out of our lives.

What makes the program work are the volunteers. They weren't parents or anything like that, they were friends. Someone you could go to when you need help and to feel safe.

When we got back home each youth was matched up with a volunteer committed partner who will be our friends and work with us for a whole year, helping us accomplish goals we made and with any day-to-day problems that could come up. These committed partners are giving up a lot of their own spare time for us, meeting with us each week, and talking to us on the phone all the time, and it is because they really care about us. This part of the program is a 1-year followthrough.

For 1 whole year, once a month, all the youth, committed partners, volunteers and staff have followthrough meetings where we can all come back together to learn about each other's experiences and successes, and continue to learn together. The youth get lots of help from their committed partners, the staff and volunteers, but are taught that we are responsible for our own lives, the actions we take and how we change our lives.

The Youth At Risk Program provides opportunities that are not usually given to youth like us. They help us get jobs and do the little things that help us feel better about ourselves, to improve our self-esteem.

We do fun things like different workshops, going to the Ice Palace, which many of us never had the opportunity to do before. They provide opportunities that weren't in our reach to help make our lives better. We are learning how we can help ourselves.

Through training in leadership, we can help give back by organizing and holding our own fund raisers to raise extra money for the extracurricular activities. We get to take advantages of new things and experiences, and we really get a lot out of it.

My committed partner, Steffani Orndoff, helps me a lot. If I have a goal I am working on, she helps me achieve it in any way she

can. If I get into trouble, she won't come to my rescue, but rather give me advice and show me other options so that I can make choices about what to do. She is very supportive in the decisions I make. I don't just consider her as my committed partner; I consider her my friend.

I know the program works because it has really made a big difference with me and helped me change my life. It has given me a lot of room to let my parents be my parents. I no longer have to question why they say what they say because I know they love me and only want what is best for me. I don't close myself off from them any more. I can just be myself, and they can be my parents. I know now that I can accomplish anything I really want to.

Mr. KENNEDY. That was excellent, Maria. Thank you very much for coming such a long way. Now we hear from our last witness today, JoEllen Deters from Kansas.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Durbec may be found at end of hearing.]

STATEMENT OF JOELLEN DETERS, YOUTH AMBASSADOR, KANSAS

Ms. DETERS. Hi. I am JoEllen Deters, the state president for the Kansas Association of Future Homemakers of America. Your support of vocational student organizations was demonstrated by the passing of the Carl Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act which President Bush recently signed.

As Kansans, we are proud that Senator Nancy Kassebaum was the ranking minority representative on the committee that drafted this legislation.

Future Homemakers of America is a vocational student organization that promotes personal growth and leadership development for young men and women within the framework of the home economics curriculum. By identifying and addressing their own concerns and issues, members strengthen the family, increase their self-esteem and learn skills for life.

As the only youth center leadership organization that focuses on family, Future Homemakers of America is working to strengthen the unit of a family. Regarding the increasing problem of violent adolescent crimes, Kent Hayes, codirector of the Menninger Youth Program, recently stated: "We need to shift back to an emphasis in our society on family."

Through the home economics curriculum, students learn parenting skills as well as child development concepts which can help prevent child abuse by increasing awareness of realistic expectations of children. Knowing what to expect from a child promotes positive parenting and reduces the frustrations that often lead to child abuse. Individual and chapter projects in the area of family communications help youth recognize the importance of family relations.

Along with experiencing the feeling of accomplishment for completing individual and group projects relating to the family and the community, members also have the opportunity to increase their self-esteem by participating in the Power of One Individual Growth Program. Through the Power of One Program, individuals identify

those areas of greatest importance and turn goals into a realistic plan of action that can be completed in a short time. When goals are reached, FHA/HERO members are recognized for their achievements by local chapters as well as by state and national associations.

As members gain confidence in themselves, they have the chance to help other youth through peer education—teens teaching teens. As well as gaining knowledge in the areas of concern, whether it is managing money, promoting health lifestyles, or cleaning up the environment, members also have the opportunity to develop communication and leadership skills by being peer educators.

The key to success in Future Homemakers of America is members who take the initiative to identify current youth issues, and work in cooperation with advisers to plan, carry out and evaluate meaningful projects. While members work on projects with the chapter, they gain valuable skills for life. Planning, decisionmaking, goal setting, problem solving and intrapersonal communications are important skills for youth to acquire now and continue to practice in the future as leaders in society.

We appreciate your commitment in assuring that our youth will continue to have programs which provide leadership development opportunities.

On behalf of all the youth ambassadors, I would like to thank you, the Budget Committee, and Congressman Kennedy, for giving us the chance to share with you today.

Now, before I relinquish the floor, I would like to introduce you to the 200 young people who are here from across the country, the youth ambassadors.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Deters may be found at end of hearing.]

Mr. KENNEDY. Well, I just have one question for you. Couldn't you come up with kind of an innovative way to end this hearing today. These guys are telling me that that is the way all their hearings end up here.

Listen, I do want to just thank every one of you, particularly the last panel, for the excellent testimony that each of you have given. I think the spirit that you have generated in this room is the spirit that this Congress and this country needs to feel if we are really going to do what is necessary to give all the children in our country the opportunities that you have been given. You are exceptional because not only have you been provided the opportunity, but you took advantage of it. You set aside the problems and difficulties that you face and you strove to be the best you can be.

We are all proud of you. We thank you for coming. We hope that you can inspire all the Congressmen and Senators that you will see today and throughout the rest of the week to find their consciences and to do what is right for our country and for our young people.

Thank you all very much. The hearing is adjourned.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH P. KENNEDY II

First of all, let me give a big welcome to all the youth ambassadors and their chaperons who have traveled as far away as the Alaska, Hawaii, the Virgin and North Mariana Islands to take part in this event. Let me also take this opportunity to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to you, Chairwoman Boxer, for agreeing to hold these hearings. This is the second consecutive year that you have held a hearing commemorating National Children's Day which I think is indicative of your deep concern and interest for our nation's children. Children have found a true friend and advocate through your work here on this committee and in Congress to fight for the programs that are desperately needed to give them a fair chance to succeed. I commend you and admire you, Chairwoman Boxer, for your dedication throughout the years in advocating on behalf of our Nation's most vulnerable citizens: our children.

I would also like to express my thanks to Cissy Houston and her daughter, Whitney, for their efforts on behalf of Children's Day 1990 and the work they do year round through The Whitney Houston Foundation for Children. One of the songs that Whitney Houston sings sums up why honoring our children with a special day is so important. The lyrics read, "I believe the children are our future. Teach them well and let them lead the way. Show them all the beauty they possess inside. Give them a sense of pride to make it easier. Let the children's laughter, remind us how we use to be." It is with this spirit that we celebrate National Children's Day.

These are important times for Congress and for our nation. As we consider a Budget Reduction plan we are making critical decisions affecting the health and welfare of our nation's citizens. Reducing Guaranteed Student Loans by $2 billion and reducing mandatory programs like foster care and AFDC will have far reaching effects on our kids ability to compete and succeed in this society. So as we debate this budget this week and plan for our next budget this year, we must keep in mind how our nation's children our doing. The odds are stacked up against our children: 25% of the children in this country live in poverty, 90% of high

school students try alcohol or drugs, 50% of inner city kids drop out of high school, 100,000 children on any given night sleep on our streets. But with the help of a number of fine programs, we can reach out and help these kids beat these odds.

Every one of these kids in this room has risen above trying circumstances or has reached out to others in their community or has been involved in some program that has improved their lives. By honoring these children, others will be inspired. Kelly Sanchez from New Mexico is a teen mother but with the help of the New Futures School she was able to stay in school and complete her education. Andrew Nestor from Maryland struggled with substance abuse until he found the strength and courage and the help of an outpatient and school group program in order to stay clean. Jorge Ochoa from Idaho has become an exemplary student thanks to his determination and the help of a Migrant Summer School program. David Bailey from New Hampshire faced some difficult times at home, but was able to overcome this with the help of the Homewardbound program he was able to get things settled at home. Ree Flowers from Missouri has beaten the odds by learning to take charge of her own life despite being bumped around by foster programs with help of an Independent Living Program.

Time, effort, dedication, understanding and guidance are key to successful programs, but without funding, these services cannot survive. I think passage of the Young Americans Act this year would be a good start to begin to fund these model programs. This bill also establishes a national youth policy and provides kids with an opportunity to become involved with political decisions. The Young Americans Act is currently tied up in the Human Services Reauthorization Conference and I need your help to get this through.

There is a false notion is this country, that people just don't count if they aren't 21 years of age. There is a notion that kids are not productive citizens or that they shouldn't be taken seriously. There is a notion that productive employment opportunities are only met for those aged 21 and over. We have to dispel these notions and begin investing in our children's lives. I think Abraham Lincoln sums it up well: "A child is a person who is going to carry on what you have started. He is going to sit where you are sitting and when you are gone, attend to those things which you think are important. You may adopt all the policies you please, but how they are carried out depends on him. He will assume control of your cities, your states, your nation. He is going to move in and take your churches, your schools, your university, your corporations...The fate of humanity is in your hands."

Madam Chairmwoman and members of this committee and honored guests, let's seize the opportunity and improve our children's lives. Our nation's future depends on this.

CONGRESSMAN

JOE KENNEDY

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 4, 1990

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(202) 225-5111

REP. KENNEDY TESTIFIES AT HEARING COMMEMORATING NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY 1990

(Washington, D.C.) -- Congressman Joseph Kennedy (D-Massachusetts), recording star Whitney Houston, and youths from around the country testified before the House Budget Committee today to highlight a week of events commemorating National Children's Day.

This year's hearing focused on children who have overcome adverse situations through innovative private and public programs around the country. Over two hundred youth ambassadors were sent by their Governors to represent forty-five states at the events in Washington D.C.

Congressman Kennedy stated about the youth ambassadors: "Every one of these kids has risen above trying circumstances or has reached out to others in their community or has been involved in some programs that has improved their lives. By honoring these children, others will be inspired."

Twenty youth ambassadors testified before the House Budget Committee about programs that helped them overcome obstacles such as drugs, pregnancy, dropping out of high school, homelessness, or poverty.

Congressman Kennedy states: "These young people are models for a generation of kids growing up today. They have risen above the barriers commonly faced by their generation--whether these barriers be drugs,poverty or broken homes."

In his testimony, Congressman Kennedy spoke of the importance of adequately funding programs for children. He advocated for passage of the Young Americans Act to fund model programs, such as those featured at the hearing. Congressman Kennedy is the House sponsor of the Young Americans Act, which is modeled after the successful Older Americans Act.

National Children's Day was established by Congressional Resolution in 1989 as a day for Americans to celebrate children as our nation's most valuable asset. The resolution which was sponsored by Congressman Kennedy and Senator Mark O. Hatfield (R-Oregon), designates the second Sunday in October (October 14, 1990) as National Children's Day. The twin sons of Congressman Kennedy originally came up with the idea of a National Children's Day.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. WILLIAM F. GOODLING

MADAM CHAIRWOMAN, YOUTH AMBASSADORS, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMAN:

I AM PLEASED TO BE HERE TODAY TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS BUDGET COMMITTEE TASK FORCE HEARING BEING HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY ON OCTOBER 14.

ONE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES TASK FORCE INVOLVES EXAMINING A VARIETY OF ISSUES WHICH IMPACT ON THE LIVES OF CHILDREN, INCLUDING EDUCATION AND HEALTH, AND ENSURING THAT THEY RECEIVE APPROPRIATE ATTENTION DURING THE ANNUAL CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET PROCESS. AS THE RANKING REPUBLICAN MEMBER OF THIS BUDGET COMMITTEE TASK FORCE, I HAVE WORKED WITH CHAIRWOMAN BOXER ON THESE ISSUES, AND THE TOPIC OF TODAY'S HEARING FITS IN WELL WITH THE PRIORITIES OF THE TASK FORCE.

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK CHAIRWOMAN BOXER AND CONGRESSMAN KENNEDY FOR SCHEDULING THIS HEARING AND FOR ALLOWING A YOUNG LADY FROM MY HOME STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA, WHO I WILL BE INTRODUCING IN JUST A MOMENT, TO TESTIFY.

THE MISSION STATEMENT OF NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY CALLS IT "A DAY FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES TO CELEBRATE CHILDREN AND YOUTH AS THE MOST VALUABLE ASSET OF THE NATION." I AGREE THAT OUR YOUNG PEOPLE ARE OUR COUNTRY'S MOST IMPORTANT RESOURCE; AFTER ALL, TODAY'S CHILDREN WILL BECOME TOMORROW'S WORKERS AND LEADERS.

AS THE RANKING REPUBLICAN MEMBER ON THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR, I WORK WITH MY COLLEAGUES ON BOTH SIDES OF THE AISLE IN CRAFTING FEDERAL EDUCATION POLICY. THE GOAL OF THE COMMITTEE IS TO ASSIST LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN PROVIDING OUR NATION'S CHILDREN, ESPECIALLY DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN, WITH EVERY AVAILABLE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY. A SUCCESSFUL APPROACH TO EDUCATION REQUIRES A COMMITMENT FROM OUR ELECTED OFFICIALS AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT, OUR EDUCATORS, PARENTS AND CHILDREN THEMSELVES.

AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE FEDERAL ROLE IN EDUCATION, PRESIDENT BUSH RECENTLY SIGNED INTO LAW THE CARL D. PERKINS VOCATIONAL AND APPLIED TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION ACT, A MEASURE I INTRODUCED ALONG WITH CHAIRMAN GUS HAWKINS. THIS LAW UPDATES THE FEDERAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM AND IS A MAJOR STEP FORWARD IN THIS IMPORTANT AREA.

AS INDUSTRY BECOMES MORE TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COMPETITION INCREASES, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT VOCATIONAL EDUCATION KEEP PACE. THE NEW VOCATIONAL EDUCATION LAW WILL HELP ENSURE STUDENTS RECEIVE THE EDUCATION THEY NEED AND THAT BUSINESS HAS ACCESS TO WELL-TRAINED EMPLOYEES. I HAVE ENCOURAGED STUDENTS AND PARENTS TO CONSIDER VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AS THE FIRST STEP TOWARD A REWARDING CAREER. THE CARL

D. PERKINS VOCATIONAL AND APPLIED TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION ACT ADDRESSES THE CHALLENGES FACING THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM AS WE MOVE TOWARD THE 21ST CENTURY.

AS WE FOCUS TODAY ON PROGRAMS THAT WORK IN OUR SCHOOLS, WE MUST REMEMBER THAT THEY WILL NOT WORK IF OUR CHILDREN CANNOT READ AND WRITE. IN MY VIEW, ILLITERACY IS THE NUMBER ONE DOMESTIC PROBLEM FACING OUR NATION. THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ESTIMATES THAT THERE ARE FROM 25 TO 74 MILLION FUNCTIONAL ILLITERATES IN THIS COUNTRY. ILLITERACY IS, WITH RARE EXCEPTIONS, INTERGENERATIONAL.

I HAVE ALSO WORKED IN CONGRESS TO CREATE THE EVEN START PROGRAM, WHICH ADDRESSES THE INTERGENERATIONAL ASPECTS OF ILLITERACY. EVEN START SEEKS TO HELP PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN LEARN TOGETHER, RECOGNIZING THAT LEARNING DOES NOT STOP AS SOON AS KIDS LEAVE SCHOOL FOR THE DAY. PARENTS MUST BE ABLE TO SUPPLEMENT THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION AT HOME, AND IF PARENTS ARE UNABLE TO DO THIS BECAUSE OF THEIR OWN LIMITATIONS, OUR CHILDRENS' EFFORTS IN SCHOOL MAY FALL SHORT.

ILLITERACY AND POVERTY SHARE AN UNFORTUNATE COMMON BOND. IN THE UNITED STATES, FAMILIES IN WHICH NEITHER PARENT IS A HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE INCLUDE APPROXIMATELY 39 PERCENT OF THE CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY; ONLY 7 PERCENT OF DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN COME FROM FAMILIES WHERE PARENTS ARE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES. OBVIOUSLY MUCH MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE TO ATTACK THE PROBLEM OF ILLITERACY, BUT A FOCUS ON PROGRAMS THAT WORK ALLOWS US TO SEE FIRST-HAND THE BENEFITS OF BEING ABLE TO READ AND WRITE.

THIS HEARING WILL ALLOW TWENTY YOUTH AMBASSADORS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY TO SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS WHICH HAVE HELPED THEM TO CONTINUE THEIR EDUCATIONS. I WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME MS. WHITNEY HOUSTON AND THANK HER FOR HELPING TO BRING THESE AMBASSADORS TO WASHINGTON FOR THE WEEK AND FOR ALL OF HER WORK ON CHILDREN'S ISSUES.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO WELCOME ANITA TAYLOR, A YOUTH AMBASSADOR FROM PENNSYLVANIA, WHO WILL BE TESTIFYING HERE TODAY. ANITA ATTENDS FARRELL HIGH SCHOOL IN THE FARRELL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT, LOCATED IN THE NORTHWESTERN CORNER OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

THE FARRELL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT IS THE EIGHTH POOREST AMONG THE COMMONWEALTH'S 501 SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND 65% OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT'S POPULATION ARE MINORITY STUDENTS. THE FARRELL DISTRICT'S DROPOUT RATE, HOWEVER, IS LESS THAN 3%, SUBSTANTIALLY LOWER THAN THE 22% NATIONAL AVERAGE. THIS REMARKABLE STATISTIC CAN BE TRACED TO INNOVATIVE AND EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS WHICH THE FARRELL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT HAS BEEN DEVELOPING FOR THE PAST 25 YEARS.

AMONG THESE SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS ARE THE TEEN PARENTING PROGRAM AND THE INFANT-TODDLER CHILD CARE PROGRAM, WHICH ALLOWED ANITA TO ATTEND SCHOOL WHILE SHE WAS PREGNANT, AND TO CONTINUE TO ATTEND CLASSES AFTER THE BIRTH OF HER SON.

AGAIN, I WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME ANITA TO THIS COMMITTEE HEARING AND LOOK FORWARD TO HER REMARKS ABOUT THE SUCCESS OF FARRELL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT PROGRAMS, PROGRAMS THAT WORK.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARY JO BLANCHARD

Hello, my name is Mary Jo Blanchard. I'm sixteen years old and live in East Hartford, Connecticut. I represent an organization called Common Ground. This is a leadership group specializing in diversity that is based in the town of Hartford. The members of Common Ground are high school students in their sophomore and junior years. All of us live in the Greater Hartford area and surrounding towns. Many of us come from different backgrounds and ethnic groups so we tend to make quite an unusual grouping of young students! However, we consider this one of our greatest qualities, not a fault.

Many people ask me what exactly Common Ground is. They get confused that it is a leadership group yet the members are not required to have proven their ability. This is a program for developing potential, individually and as a group. with the help of Ellen Smith-Bigelow, Janis Abrams, and all of the liasons from the different schools this is possible and indeed successful.

When looking back on my semester of training for Common Ground I find that it is the "weekend" that stands out.And had only been the second time the whole group was together and just about everybody was a stranger.But by the end of the retreat at Camp Jewel a miracle had occurred, in two short days we had become family. We had also learned to cope with each other, overcome obstacles, and reach a common goal. We had stopped stereotyping and judging each other and just accepted everybody for who the were inside. The barriers of prejudice had fallen. The atmosphere that weekend was like nothing I had ever experienced, it was harmonious and peaceful.

After our weekend together we put our newly improved skills to work and began to discuss issues. Since we were such a varied group many people had different concerns and we covered them all. We would talk for hours about issues such as freedom, peace, apartheid, abortion, drug abuse, the environment, and what could be done to solve these problems. We would also discuss issues that hit a little closer to home, such as teenage pregnancy, drug problems in our schools, drop-outs, student rights, censorship, and the homeless situation. Unfortunately, we didn't figure out anything that would eliminate any of these problems. However, we didn't give up doing what little we could. Some people see injustices in the world and continue to walk on by, pretending not to see and hoping it will go away on its own. We choose to stop and offer a hand and try to change the world for the better. That is a Common Ground we all share. We try to accomplish this through volunteer work and community service. We have received so much, now is our turn to start giving back.

I'm sure that there are many groups similar in construction to Common Ground. Perhaps they are not as successful and one might ask "What makes this group so special?" or "Why does it work so well?" I would answer these questions quite easily. It is due to the people in Common Ground. Everybody gets involved. There is so much enthusiasm and optimism you can't help but take it back with you to your school and all the other parts of your life.

I consider myself an average example of how we bring it back with us. Here are a few things I have done since common Ground. I was concerned about the way people deal with each other so I joined our school's Human Relations Council. Since then I have become Co-Chairperson of the Council and have worked on projects such as Black History Month and Cultural Awareness Day. I also noticed a need for a club where students who enjoy community service could get together and volunteer. I founded what we now call Service Club and have been elected the President. We've worked on many projects through this club; recycling, tree planting, soup kitchens, the Special Olympics, the Cancer Foundation, and Amnesty International are just a few examples. Currently we are working on forming a Project Literacy U.S. chapter in our town. I am also an active member of the Student Council. Through this group I took part in throwing a Senior Prom for all of the Senior Citizens of our town. It was a huge success and will be around for years to come. I've also been working on simulating the Common Ground weekend for a Student Council retreat at the begining

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of the school year. Another group that I'm involved with is the East Hartford Youth Advisory Board. Through this I have expanded to work on branches of Youth Services such as Safe Rides, Peer Advocates, and latchkey kids. Common Ground taught me to consider the world around me and to do what I can to make it better. It is evident through my actions, as well as other members, that we have taken this to heart and plan on reaching this goal. This is why Common Ground is as successful as it is. I am very proud that I had the privilege to be part of it .

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LASHAWN BROWN

During my pregnancy, I was ashamed because society severely criticizes teen pregnancy. I did not want to go anywhere and when I did get out, I felt as if eyes were following me. I reached the point that I hated myself. My peers looked at me strangely. Many of the relationships that I had with my friends changed when they learned that I was pregnant. My teachers were either unsympathetic to the stresses I was experiencing or lacked the ability to reach out and help me.

Before I learned about the Young Mothers' Program at Ensley High School, I was sure that I would have to drop out of school. Since my family receives welfare, and there were already five children in the family, I could not afford child care for my baby. My baby's father had denied paternity. Even though I eventually went through the court system to establish paternity, I have currently received only one child support check. He is reported to be residing in another state now. The Young Mothers' Program accepted my daughter, Tina, into their Infant Care Center so that I could continue my education. The principal, Mr. Warren, bought my bus pass which enabled Tina and me to get to school. In the sunshine of late summer, the rain of fall, the cold of winter and again in the spring, we rode the bus together to school. The trip was often difficult because we had to get out of bed at 5:30 a.m., catch the bus, and transfer buses downtown to get to school. In June of this year, I graduated with a 4.0 GPA. I could not have done it without the Young Mothers' Program because I had no one else to turn to for help. Looking back on that experience, I don't see how I actually did it. But the Program had so many encouraging faces and helping hands. The nurse, Ms. Johnson, at their Teen Self-Help Clinic monitored my postpartum progress, and checked on Tina when she became ill at school. The counselor, Mrs. Buford, kept me on track toward graduation. She also helped me deal with my "emotional roller-coaster". Students in the Infant Care Training Center along with Mrs. Hall, its director, held Tina for the first eight weeks because she screamed without close body contact. Many of Mom's friends were telling me to just let her cry or she would be spoiled. But Mrs. Hall knew that Tina had an immature nervous system that just needed time to develop. What a warm, comforting start she had in life instead of a fearful, frustrating one. Today she is a very independent and I might add, very bright, one-year old who is busy exploring her world from two-feet high.

The program has impacted my life in many ways. It has heightened my courage and self esteem. It has shown me that patience and perseverance pay off. It has instilled in me the determination to go on and complete my career goals in spite of the fact that it will be much harder with a child. Thanks to the unwaivering help from Ms. McDonald, the Program Coordinator, I am now a full-time freshman at Birmingham-Southern College under a Ford Foundation Grant. They have also helped me to obtain free child care for Tina at a day care center near the college in spite of Alabama Department of Human Resources' regulations restricting child care slots to two-year, post-secondary students. Ms. McDonald's call to the governor's office was needed to intervene.

The future for Tina and me looks bright now. We hope to find alternate housing soon which will take us out of the projects. I am working very hard to make the Dean's list, and Tina already has a Birmingham-Southern T-shirt.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF MELISA GARCIA

My name is Melisa Garcia. I am a 16 year old mother with a 14 month old son. I represent The Center for Adolescent Parents, a program of the Tucson Association for Child Care, Inc., 1030 N. Alvernon Way, Tucson, AZ 85711. The program is free for all of us.

Our program consists of different areas, all geared toward "empowering" us in all parts of life. For example, we have the STEP Program (Systematic Training for Efective Parenting) which helps us in areas such as socialization, language, cognitive motor infant stimulation, and self-help parenting skills.

Another important part of our program is studying for the GED exam. We have one-on-one counseling with our GED instructor, who sets up an individualized program of study. There are also two volunteers who help us with any problems in our GED work. We spend nine hours a week on this part of the program.

Once a week, we have career counseling with one of the staff who specializes in this area. She teaches different career skills like job interviewing and writing resumes. If we are interested in a particular career and would like to know more about it, our career counselor will bring in a speaker to talk about that career.

Every Tuesday we have "Time to Talk". This is our time to discuss our problems associated with husbands, boyfriends and family members. We talk about anything we need to discuss. It is very confidential. We laugh, cry, and give and get advice from the other girls. It is a warm, caring time to share with others.

This program is successful for many reasons. One reason is that we have a multi-level curriculum. Not only do we study for the GED exam, but we learn skills for dealing with all parts of life, like children, partners, and careers. We learn it all from geometry to grooming to good parenting!

Another reason for this programs success is that it is multicultural. The clients at TCAP represent the Hispanic, Native American, African-American and Anglo communities of Tucson. As we grow together, we also learn respect for and understanding of each other's culture.

Finally, but most important, is the staff. We are taught by caring professionals, who are <u>always</u> supportive and positive. Thanks to their help, I have grown and matured enough to be accepted into college this semester. I especially need to mention our caregivers in our free nursery, who take such excellent care of our children while we study. It really helps to <u>not</u> have to worry about my son because I know he is safe.

In conclusion, let me say that I feel very lucky to have found and participated in such a great program as The Center for Adolescent Parents. It has helped me find a direction in my life and then given me the skills to go out and achieve my goals.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CIPRIANO NEVAREZ

My name is Cipriano Nevarez. I am 16 years old and was born in Zaragosa, a small town in Mexico. I am a sophomore at Socorro High School which is in El Paso, Texas. I come from a family of 7. My father Jaime is a construction worker, and my mother Maria is now a house wife. I have 2 younger brothers, Jesus and Lorenzo, and two sisters, Nellie and Araceli. They all attend school here in El Paso.

I am representing the Texas Migrant Program. This program serves 187 students in the Socorro Independent School District and has been in operation for over 30 years. It helps explain to parents the importance of staying in one place so that their children can attend school. My family has moved several times to do farm work since I was born, but now we have decided to live here in El Paso.

The migrant program offered me and 94 other students a chance to spend the summer at St. Edwards University in Austin, Texas. It helped me in knowing what the real world will be like and recognizing the difference from working in the field and working in a nice air-conditioned office. It also helped me in learning to live on my own without my parents' help. I think this was very helpful for me and many of the other students.

When I was in the program this summer, I received an award from my supervisors for excellent work habits. I also received certificates for highest average in math and good behavior. I received many other awards in my classes; this made me feel good about myself.

Before I went to the program I wasn't really sure of what I wanted to do with my future. I didn't really have any goals. When I came back from Austin I knew what I wanted to do in my future. I wanted to stay in school and go to college and make a real future for myself. This is now my goal to finish high school and go to college.

When I was in Austin at St. Edward's University, it was just like being back home. We had everything we needed. I was comfortable because there was a lobby where we would gather with friends and watch T.V. or have meetings.

The money that the State of Texas spends on the Migrant Program is well spent. If this program continues, I bet we will have more graduates from colleges and universities. It helps students to make decisions and know what to do in the future. This is important for students who think of dropping out or haven't really thought of their future. I think that the program will exist forever with the help of many people who care.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AUNDRA HENDERSON

To me foster care is a program which helps and protects America's youth. Even though foster care has many good points, it also has it's bad points. I feel that if placement and adoption were processed more quickly, then the program would have less problems. The program needs more involvement from the people, such as more social workers who care and like what they are doing for other people. The program also needs more foster families who are willing to take any child into their home, no matter what race or age he or she is. Often many problems are caused because of the children brought into foster care. Not all children will be cooperative because of their previous home life.

America's youth has many new choices they can make these days. Without proper guidance the choices these young people will make, will not always be the correct ones, which is one reason why the program is good because it offers the foster child a family, shelter, schooling, clothing, and most of all love which makes a normal home life.

One of the most confusing parts of foster care in sexual abuse cases is that the judicial system is doing very little if anything at all about punishing the offenders. The importance of foster care in sexual abuse cases is that a child raised in a happy family and feeling apart of that family, the child will mature into a responsible adult and not an abusive parent.

When I moved in with my soon, adopted family, 3½ years ago at age 12, I smoked, I had absolutely no interest in school, I did not use manners or care about my behavior except getting attention in any way I could, and It did'nt bother me at all to lie. Now after lots of love, caring, long talks, and discipline, I make honor roll at school, was captain of my school basketball team, now starting my third year. I was in the school choir, I was 6, 7, and 8th grade princess, and I was also on the student council. I know now I have a future and have set my goals high because my family now has taught me I can be and do anything I work hard at.

I hope that after my High school years that my talent and help from the foster care program, can be included in my college plans. The foster care program has helped many young people. If we all take pride in the program, it will continue to flourish.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ALICE W. TUCK

I am Alice.W.Tuck and I was born with a hearing loss. We don't know why. As a baby I went to the Well Child Clinic run by the City of Belfast Nursing Association and the State of Maine Public Health Nursing. There they gave me my shots and checked on my growth. When I did not start to talk they told my parents to check my hearing. We went to the FT Hill Center in Waterville to find out. My diagnosis was profound sensorineural hearing loss. A wonderful person there taught my mom about hearing loss and told her about state services.

We applied and I received help from the Crippled Children's Program, a Division of Maternal and Child Health, Dept. of Human Services. I am not crippled because I can walk and move my body, but I can't hear at all. This program helped me for five years. It paid for my hearing testing, my hearing aids and for speech therapy. We went three times a week for speech until I went to school. We went to the University of Maine at Orono for hearing testing and to check my ears. My parents decided to use cued speech and the people at the state didn't mind.

The public health nurse introduced my mom to a nice man from Social Services and he helped me to go to the Belfast Area Children's Center. He got assistance for me from the Dept of Human Services, a Division of Social Services under Title XX and I was the first person with a handicap to go there. I learned to play with other kids and sit in a group. This man also made it possible for a home preschool teacher to come to my house. I think the first one came from the Bureau of Mental Retardation. Then we moved and the Dept. of Education sent a migrant preschool teacher to my house. I got help through Mid Coast Preschool Services. The teachers helped me to do puzzles, learn about animals, to sit and made me speak. They helped me so much I was able to go to nursery school. We did coloring, reading and writing. I liked learning with the regular kids.

Every summer since I was four I have gone to a summer program with other children who use cued speech. At first we were funded by Crippled Children's Program. This part is very important as the summer program turned into Cued Speech Family camp. This year was ten years of camp and the Dept. of Education and the Bureau of Rehabilitation have given money over the years for camp. Camp is special. I learn how to talk and cue. My friends are there who are deaf and can cue like me. Now we older ones take care of and watch the little deaf kids. This means we babysit them while their parents meet, learn and talk.

Now I am in the 8th grade in SAD # 34 at Crosby Jr. High School. I am better than when I was little. Since kindergarten, the school has given me an interpreter who

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cues and now the school encourages other kids to cue to me. We have a cued speech club. The Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation has helped me with a TV captioner. I can watch TV and know what they are talking about especially during news. The Bureau has also helped me to get a TDD so I can call my friends on the phone and talk to anyone.

Thank you for asking me to come to Washington D.C. to be a youth ambassador from Maine. I also want to thank Dr. Cornett and Gallaudet College in Washington D.C. for helping me and my parents learn to cue.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DONNA WASHINGTON

The Mississippi Job Corps Program helps me from becoming a victim of hopelessness in many different ways.

I have had many different experiences of feeling hopeless and helpless. First of all, the Mississippi Job Corps Program has changed my life completely. Before I entered the program, I felt like I was one of life's failures. I felt that I couldn't succeed any goal that I tried to reach. I was feeling down and I needed a pick-me-up, instead of turning to drugs or alcohol, life's most common additions. I chose the Job Corps Program.

The decision I made was absolutely done correct. Soon I entered the program on the day of May 18, 1988. During my stay at the Mississippi Job Corps Center, I obtained a trade which is Nurse-Aide. Also, I obtained a GED (General Equivalency Diploma). Soon after that, I became actuated by my experiences. After that period I began to progress even more.

A job I received, employed by Christian City Convalescent Center in Atlanta, Georgia. I don't feel hopeless or helpless anymore. I feel that I can succeed any goal.

You all need to have the ambition to succeed. It will keep you off the street and keep you from being alone and homeless. Realize that there are different kinds of programs that help prevent us from becoming a victim of hopelessness, helplessness and homelessness.

Get involved stop feeling sorry for yourself, obtain the goals that you have set out to succeed.

Get with the program:
The Mississippi Job Corps Program

It helps the ones that want
to be helped.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TARA CHAMNESS

In my case, Project Chance has made a big difference in my life and that of Brooke, my 17 month old daughter. Before Brooke was born, I had hoped for a career in the Health Care Area. Once I had her, I didn't know how I'd be able to go to school and take care of my baby too. Being a teen mother isn't easy in itself, but adding the responsibility of going to school and studying too, I didn't know if I could do it. Then there was the financial part of school to face too.

When I went to Project Chance to see if they could help me, I was nervous and was waiting for the customary feeling of being looked down on because of being a teen mom. From the every first moment, Loretta, my caseworker, made me feel good about my goals and going on to school. She took my application, explained what Project Chance is all about and just how they could help me attain my goals. When I took the test and made 100% on the test, she made me feel like she was really proud of me too.

Project Chance has helped me with my books for school, the uniforms that are necessary for the nurses Training at John A. Logan College, and gas mileage to and from school. Loretta has always been just a phonecall away if I had a question about anything. She has provided me with listings of the available daycare for Brooke, and never fails to ask about how Brooke is adjusted to my going to school and what quality time she and I are able to have together. I don't think that is included in her job and that's part of what makes working with Project Chance such a good experience.

The people at the Marion office for Project Chance make me feel good about myself and what I'm able to achieve on my own. I think that that is what makes this program work. I'm not just a case number, I'm Tara Chamness, person, mother, and student.

I've just finished my first semester at John A Logan College with a 4.7 of 5.0 and I couldn't wait to tell Loretta. I think she was almost as excited as I was. She keeps telling me that I can go places and she helps me keep believing it too. I feel good about what I'm doing and that has a big impact on how Brooke sees her Mommy. I don't have to settle for a minimum wage job and trying to take care of the baby on that kind of salary. I'm going to be able to have a career that I'm proud of, one that will provide for my daughter and myself.

What makes Project Chance work, in my opinion, are the people in the offices that we rely on so much, and their attitude towards us. They make it so easy to feel good about yourself and they really care about each and every one of us as individuals. Besides being there to help provide the books and other things necessary for school, they offer positive support. That shouldn't ever be minimized. Too often, as a teen mom, when asking for help, I have been 'just a case number' and that's demoralizing, but never at Project Chance.

The moral support, to me, is what makes this program work. I just thank God that I have this chance to go on to get a good education, and that I have the support of Loretta, and the others at the Marion Project Chance office to back me up.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ANITA TAYLOR

When I first got pregnant I didn't know what to do. I was seventeen and scared. I wouldn't go to the doctor because I didn't want anyone to know. I thought about having an abortion but I just couldn't do that to myself and my unborn child. I also thought about giving my child up for adoption. I didn't know what to do. I prayed for a solution to my problem.

School came quickly and so did the morning sickness. I could barely keep my lunch down and went to the school nurse for help. She was very kind and talked to me about my health and that I needed to see a doctor. She was concerned about me and my baby and arranged for my appointment at the health care center. She made me realize that I had to face my situation and the first step was to tell my mother. She was hurt, but couldn't really say anything because she made the same mistake when she was younger.

I started attending the Teen Parenting class during school and learned how to care for myself and my unborn child. I also began to prepare for my child's care by registering for the Infant-Toddler Child Care Program at the school.

When I could no longer attend classes at school, a tutor came to my home so I wouldn't get behind in my studies. After the birth of my baby I completed the arrangements for his care so I could finish my school year.

While I attend classes my son is in the Child Care Center where he receives a nutritional snack, a hot lunch and lots of loving care. Transportation to and from school for the two of us is provided by the school.

I still attend the Teen Parenting classes that help young mothers cope with the responsibility of raising children.

I love the Farrell Area School District because it has given me the opportunity to stay in school, continue my education and prepare for my future as a doctor.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JONATHAN SILVERMAN

I am the Chairperson of the Massachusetts State Student Advisory Council to the Board of Education. The Student Advisory Council was established in 1971 by Chapter 1009 of the Massachusetts General Laws. Our membership consists of two high school students, elected by their peers, from every public high school in the state. To better address the needs and issues of students, our organization is divided into eleven Regional Student Advisory Councils, each of which elect representatives to serve on the State Student Advisory Council.

The students in the Student Advisory Council create the group's agenda for the year. This process of prioritizing and goal setting is facilitated by the advisors to the Council who are staff members of the Massachusetts Department of Education. The members then join task forces to better focus on accomplishing the goals which they have set.

This year the goals of the Student Advisory Council center on improving education for all of Massachusetts' students. Massachusetts' students have been faced with two years of teacher layoffs, smaller course and extra-curricular offerings, increasingly crowded classrooms, and uncertainty regarding the fate of our public schools. In a society in which education is so highly valued, it is ironic and unfair that Massachusetts' students must watch as their schools become less able to educate. The Student Advisory Council is working hard to end these cutbacks.

We are actively encouraging the mainstreaming of Special Education students. We are promoting school mediation programs as an effective way to reduce the violence which is so rampant in our schools. We are teaching other students about the Bill of Rights, ability grouping in school, and the injustices caused by racism, sexism, and homophobia.]

The AIDS epidemic, experts say, will next ravage the youth community. We will work to educate students about this easily preventable killer. Information on this lurking danger isn't enough! We hope to help other student and health groups provide students with protection from the virus, as one Massachusetts high school has done.

Our organization is effective in airing student's concerns and it provides superb leadership opportunities for students across the state. The Student Advisory Council is a way for young people to get involved in their schools and communities. The framework for the Student Advisory Council can be easily and inexpensively replicated in any state.

This program has taught me a lot about education, political action, other people, and youth issues, but most of all it has taught me that yes, you can make a difference!

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARIA DAWN DURBEC

Hawaii Youth At Risk is a program that helps troubled youth to look at their lives and take responsibility for it. It provides youth with a structure to be more productive. Participating in the program gives youth a chance to really share about what really going on their lives in order to deal with our problems. It is a program where you have to deal with whatever was going on with you right away.

In the 10 Day Course part of the program, 57 spent 10 days together with staff and volunteers in an isolated camp away from things that could distract them. It was a place were we could really trust each other and how to follow rules for our lives. With the help of the adult volunteers and staff, we learned how to work out problems in good ways instead of fighting or with anger. It was like you didn't get to procrastinate, you just worked it out. The adult volunteers really supported the youth and made it safe for us to face the troubles we had. It wasn't just talk, they really supported us.

We learned how to work together to help one another in the course-room sessions, group exercises, running exercises and a ropes course. By the end of the 10 days it was like we were a big family and we learned that we can make something out of our lives.

What makes the program work are the volunteers. They weren't parents or anything like that, they were friends. Someone you could go to when you need help and feel safe.

When we got back home each youth was matched up with a volunteer Committed Partner who will be our friends and work with us for a whole year, helping us accomplish goals we made and with any day to day problems that could come up. These Committed Partners are giving up a lot of their own spare time for us, meeting with us each week, talking to us on the phone all the time and it is because they really care about us. This part of the program is a One Year Follow-Through.

For one whole year, once a month, all the youth, Committed Partners, volunteers and staff have Follow-Through meetings where we can all come back together to learn about each others experiences and successes and continue to learn together. The youth get lots of helps from their Committed Partners, the staff and volunteers but are taught that we are responsible for our own lives, the actions we take and how we change our lives.

The Youth At Risk program provides opportunities that are not usually given to youth like us. They help us get jobs and do the little things that help us feel better about ourselves; to improve

our self esteem. We do fun things like different workshops, going to the Ice Palace which many of us never had the opportunity to do before. They provide opportunities that weren't in our reach to help make our lives better. We are learning how we can help ourselves. Through training in Leadership, we can help give back by organizing and holding our own fundraisers to raise extra money for the extra curricular activities. We get to take advantage of new things and experiences and we really ge a lot out of it.

My committed Partner, Steffani Orndoff, helps me alot. If I have a goal I'm working on she helps me achieve it in any way she can. If I get into trouble she won't come to my rescue, but rather gives me advice and shows me other options so that I can make choices about what to do. She is very supportive in the decisions I make. I don't just consider her as my committed partner, I consider her as my friend.

I know the program works because it has really made a big difference with me and helped me changed my life. It has given me a lot of room to let my parents be my parents. I no longer have to question why they say what they say because I know they love me and only want what's best for me. I don't close myself off from them anymore. I can just be myself and they can be my parents. I know now that I can accomplish anything I really want to.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF STEPHANIE LEMING

Foster care has become a very important part of my life in the past four or five years. In December, 1985, my younger brother, sister and I were placed in a foster home in Daviess County, and, since that time, my life has made a total turn-about.

For several years my older brother and I were abused by our natural mother. We had to steal things for a living and led pitiful, dangerous lives. After so much abuse, my brother left our home and entered a children's home. My other siblings and I were not so fortunate. Because my mother was wanted for several different offenses, we began moving from state to state, living day after day on the money churches were kind enough to donate to us and items that were stolen. Throughout this time, I tried to take care of my brother and sister without the help of our mother, who was usually intoxicated. From Florida and the Carolinas to Nevada, we moved every few weeks.

In 1985, we returned to Owensboro because my grandmother was ill. Later that year, the Department for Social Services intervened, and my brother, sister and I were placed in a foster home.

In May, 1986, I moved to another foster home because things were not working out well. The next four years were spent with another foster family, but after problems arose between the foster parents, I was moved to another foster home.

Now, things are better than ever. Thanks to my new foster family, I am happier than I thought possible. My grade point average in school is approximately 3.0, and I am in the gifted-talented program. Already I have begun making plans for college, and I have great opportunities waiting for me.

At church I am an active member in my youth group. After being baptized this year, I have a joy in me that would have been inconceivable to me before this year.

Although life has been somewhat rough throughout the years, I have been able to rise to the top. I pray that I can share my story with children that are in the situation I was in and show them that there is hope. With a little happiness, children everywhere can be all that they have dreamed of being. All they need is that special touch supplied by people who care.

During the course of a person's life, he will find that he needs comfort and support from people, to live a happy and normal life. Many people can get that support from family members, however, there are less fortunate people without living family members or whose family is not supportive and comforting enough to provide encouragement.

Foster teens have more difficulty receiving comfort from family. Foster Care Workers realize this, and have found a way for foster teens to receive support. Giving teenagers in foster care the opportunity to fellowship with peers in similar family situations, the foster care system sponsors the Foster Teen Conference. At this conference, foster teens have the opportunity to have fun, talk about themselves, and form lasting friendships with other foster teens across the state. This provides the teenagers with social skills that will be beneficial to them throughout their lifetimes.

The conference also includes sessions offering foster teens guidance in independent living. When a foster child leaves foster care, he is on his own the rest of the way. The independent living classes show older children the aspects of life they will be facing, including work skills, communication and other skills vital to living independently.

Foster children need support and comfort, just like any other human. Facing this need is somewhat difficult, however, the foster care system does it quite well by providing foster teens the opportunity to be with people with whom they have common needs, interests and problems. To have a normal, happy life is a common goal among foster teens, and the conference and independent living classes are a definite beginning on the road to meeting that goal.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TYRELL GALES

Unfortunately young people in our country are often viewed by adults as having little to contribute to society. Media portrays teens as rude, underachievers, drug users, and gang members. It seems like they are more interested in reporting sensational stories than in actually examining the truth and complexities of problems. As a result many people, especially teenage males, are being hurt and stereotyped.

Today, more than ever, urban youth need to be sincerely respected. We need space and resources to develop productive programs and we need access to the media and to decision makers. Fortunately there are programs that are attempting to do this and who could serve as models for new projects.

The JFK Library Corps is a program that takes kids seriously and has confidence that young people are capable of being responsible and caring. It provides youth with an alternative to hanging out in the streets by encouraging them to do community service projects and providing the tools to get a job done.

Established by the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation in December 1985, the Corps includes Boston students from grades six through twelve who live in a cross section of Boston neighborhoods. In 1990, 124 young people volunteered over 17,000 hours to Corps sponsored community projects. Corps activities include working with the elderly, preschoolers, the hunger, and homeless, children with special needs and many others. I have enclosed a 1990 project list.

The program asks kids what they think and how they would deal with city problems. In developing projects, Corps members learn first-hand how government works and what they can do to bring about change.

Over the last four years, the JFK Library Corps has provided a nurturing environment for me to grow in many different ways. I have developed a respect for people of different races, ages, neighborhoods, and backgrounds. I've become more hesitant to make judgements about others based on the way they look or where they live.

Before I joined the Corps I was always afraid to be in the spotlight. Throughout my years as a member I have developed the confidence in myself to speak out to individuals and at large gatherings about issues that concern me.

I would like very honored to represent the JFK Library Corps and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in Washington D.C at the 1990 National Children's Day Conference. I am anxious to share my views and experiences on how others could create programs that develop self-respect and confidence in young people.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHELLE HAMBY

Right now I'm a sixteen year old girl starting my sophomore year in a new high school. This past summer I moved back home to live with my Mama and her boyfriend. For the past three years I have lived with my aunt, been in a foster home with other teenage girls, lived in a group home and stayed at an emergency shelter. Several times I've run-a-away from school and from homes where the Department of Social Services sent me. I've done some things when I was mean and angry and when I had a wild streak in me that I'm not very proud of. I wish I hadn't done those things but I sure learned a lot.

When I was thirteen, my Mama's boyfriend sexually abused me. When I told my Mama what had happened she didn't believe me and she called me a whore. Later I told my friend about what had happened to me and my friend told her parents. After some time a report was made to the Department of Social Services and someone came to school and I had to tell about what happened to me. I was taken to the Law Enforcement Center to make a statement and then brought to my aunt's home. I had been abused and all the time it hurt so much because I loved my Mama and she didn't believe me.

When I was living at my aunt's home I remember Judy, my Guardian and Litem coming to visit me. Judy listened to me and she seemed to understand how I felt. Judy didn't care about my past. She just talked to me about what I thought was important and what I wanted to talk about. I didn't have to go to court but I knew Judy was in court looking out for what was best for me.

There were times when my foster parents or a counselor would tell me Judy had called but those days we didn't talk much, because I ran so many times. I've had many people looking out for me these past years, but there were so many times when I wished all those people would get out of my life. Kit and Ann, two of my caseworkers, helped me through some times when I needed them. Because all of these people helped me I got into groups like Young Life and I had the chance to go to summer camps and Disney World. One spring I even got to go to the beach.

Once when I ran I got myself into trouble with the law and then I did have to go to court. Boy, was I scared. I got six-months probation and twenty-five hours of community service. At that time no one could help me because I just wasn't willing to help myself.

Finally I was placed in a group home with some of my friends and an understanding counselor. I've had lots of counseling and so has my Mama and her boyfriend. I've learned to forgive and so has my family and this summer things were pretty good. Now I think I'm home for good.

My sister and brothers have gotten into trouble, been on drugs and were sent to jail. I don't know what is going to happen to me but maybe I'll be a cosmetologist, a nurse or work with troubled teens. Right now I plan to finish high school and go to vocational school next year. Anyway, I want to do something where I can help people or do something that matters. Some day I'd like to see if I could either volunteer or work at a girls home to help other teens with their problems.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL BRIGGS

My story is an exceptionally different one. Troubles started early in life for me. My father left my mother and I when I was two, leaving us with nothing. She remarried a successful businessman when I was five, and that's when problems really started.

I was continually sexually abused by my babysitters, and my stepfather didn't help matters any. I was beaten by him almost daily, and from an early age I was told I was unwanted. My real father wouldn't have anything to do with me, and I felt worthless and very alone. I used to sit in my room shaking and crying because I felt so unloved and scared. I thought all hope was lost. By the time I was nine I was thinking about suicide. My mother saw that I had become very withdrawn and aggressive with my own schoolmates and at home, so we left my stepfather. We left him several times. Only each time he would come back with his promises and vows to change. A few days would go by and the destructive cycle would start all over again.

When I got into middle school I started experimenting with drugs. I was looking for a way out; an escape route from reality. I got into alcohol, marijuana, and LSD. Within two months I was in deep. My grades and life continued to plummet until I hit rock bottom. I have a long history of alcoholism in my family and being a quarter Native American didn't help me. Of most American Indians, 95 percent are either alcoholics or drug addicts. So from the beginning the odds were against me. Towards the end of my drug usage I had attempted suicide on many occasions. I was a very angry person. I was withdrawn from life and I failed to see the damage I was doing to myself.

At the end of my eighth grade year, I was admitted for treatment at Sacred Heart Adolescent Recovery Program (S.H.A.R.P.). I knew my life was as bad as it was going to get and the only way now was up. I had no self-worth and I hated life. With a lot of help from the staff and my mom, I put an end to the destruction. I tore down those walls and began to grow. I learned what drugs did to me and how scary they really are. S.H.A.R.P. taught me skills on how to regain my self confidence and strengthen, both physically and mentally. They taught me how to be comfortable with who I am. They also showed me my abilities and potential that I thought I never had before. I learned responsibility, how to make new friends, and best of all love – love for myself. They told me that before I could love others I had to first love myself. At the end of treatment I was frightened. I felt so safe and secure and I was afraid that I couldn't move on with my life. I was afraid that I wasn't strong enough.

I started to get back in touch with my heritage and I learned how to channel my feelings and express myself with art. I now do beadwork, jewelry making, leather craft, and my favorite, painting. After a while I began to share my art work with others. It makes me feel good to show them and see them smile and be happy. I want to be a positive influence on their lives.

Little by little my life has fallen into shape. I now enjoy school and earn a 3.00 average. With my talents I've earned my way into two different universities, the University of Oregon and Santa Fe School of Art, which is strictly for Native American artists. I plan on devoting my life to people and helping them. I want to become an art teacher and use art as a type of therapy for troubled teenagers like myself., There's a saying that I strongly believe in and that is, "God's gift to you is ability, and your gift to God is what you do with that ability." I truly believe that. S.H.A.R.P. has helped me to learn these things and I'm going to use my skills and abilities to take myself straight to the top. I hope I can be a positive influence for others and let them know there still is hope. You've just got to want it bad enough and most importantly, you need to believe in yourself.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CALVESTER TORRENCE

What would you do if you were in the seventh grade at Milwaukee Public Schools and you were in trouble? My name is Calvester Torrence. I am fifteen now but two years ago I was in the seventh grade and in big trouble. Luckily, I joined the One on One Program and now I have a bright future. In fact, I am about to start ninth grade at Nicolet High School, one of the best schools in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

One on One is a program created by the Greater Milwaukee Committee, a private sector civic group of business, labor and education leaders. The program began in 1987 to target "at risk" students who are in danger of failing or dropping out. It aims to increase attendance and academic achievement, improve study habits and offer help from the business community. The program is called One on One because it matches one student and one mentor.

I originally joined the One on One Program because it had after school activities and I like to play basketball. I did not know what mentors were, but I needed help with my grades. In March, 1989 I was matched with mentors Bob and Claire Milbourne. My report card said my behavior was not acceptable and I could do better. I now realize that my hopes for the future are dependent on a good education and responsible behavior.

After 18 months in the One on One Program, I have learned to keep out of trouble by avoiding people and places that can be bad for me. To avoid those problems, I play on baseball and basketball teams, go to the YMCA and spend time with my mentors and my good friends.

My grade point average has improved significantly over the past two years (1.9 GPA to 2.7 GPA); and, I am reading more books and using my time wisely on studies. My last report card also showed that my behavior has improved and now I know I can control my temper. Because of my improvement, I have been accepted at Nicolet High School as a freshman.

I have had the opportunity to speak out about the One on One Program and what it can do for Milwaukee students. I was the subject of a TV interview program with my mentors and I gave a speech to the members of the Greater Milwaukee Committee.

The One on One Program has helped me to realize the values of education and now I am headed in the right direction. I am proud of myself for working hard and turning my life around. My future looks bright. After high school, I plan to go to college at the University of Wisconsin. I wish that other kids had the same opportunities I have. Someday I hope I can help a kid in the seventh grade who is in trouble.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PHALLY CHHAY

My name is Phally Chhay, I am a 19 year old Cambodian refugee. I am going into the 12th grade at Meadowbrook High School in Richmond, VA. I have been a member of a program called the Refugee Youth Training Project, which was a federal demonstration project that lasted for two years. The program was made possible from a grant through the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Social Services, to the Office of Refugee Resettlement of the Catholic Diocese of Richmond. Sixty refugee teenagers were asked to join the project because our teachers thought that we were going to drop out of school and this project helped us to stay in school.

We each belonged to a small group and each group had an adult leader. Each group chose a topic about our culture to research, then we wrote about it and we also wrote stories about our lives. At the end we put it all together in a book. This year my group wrote about how to make a Cambodian house. We also learned how to take pictures and how to develop them. We made all of the photographs that are in the book. There is also a lot of artwork. With the book, we helped to bring alive our culture and memories.

Refugee kids have many problems here, like how to get along with Americans. There are a lot of problems with the students in the schools, especially the city schools. There are prejudiced kids who are against us living in the U.S. and they call us names like, "chinks" and "yellow monkeys". And we sometimes fight them. Some of us were in gangs before we joined this project. Another problem is that our parents want us to be like old Cambodians and we want to be like Americans. And we fight with them too. Two times I ran away. I can't get along with my step-mother, I worry a lot about my real mother who is still in Cambodia. I follow along with my friends most of the time and that is why I belonged to a gang, to be cool and to be part of a group. School is OK, but I used to skip all the time because I didn't feel like doing any work. Another problem with the Cambodian parents is that they want to pick who we will marry, but we want to date and pick our own mate. Some kids in our project had run away to be with their boyfriend or girlfriend. Some kids said they wanted to kill themselves.

When I was in the project it helped me stay out of trouble because I spent time with my group and I wasn't going out with my other friends and doing what I don't want to do. In the project I learned many new things. Some people, like the editor from the newspaper talked to us about how to interview and a photographer took us to his studio and helped us take pictures of Cambodian clothes. I also went to school almost always because our leaders always checked to see if we were going and if we were making good grades. And some kids got tutors. We also went on many field trips, I made lots of new friends. I have better grammar too, because I practiced writing for the book. I want to be a newspaper writer someday.

When we interviewed the old people, it made them feel good that we were interested in our culture. Some kids only talk to their parents when they want something but now they talk more and the parents seem to be proud of their kids when they write about their customs for Americans to read. Also, the parents liked their picture in the book! But I don't know about me and my parents because I don't live with them any more.

I think all the kids in the project feel better about themselves now, because we are not ashamed of who we are. Once we went to the Richmond Children's Museum and we had a fashion show for the American kids there and we taught them how to play Cambodian games and the Vietnamese kids cooked food for them. We were all very proud when people told us that they liked our clothes, food and games.

Now we feel like we belong more. I know that some people all over the world are prejudiced, but it's not 100%. I talked with friends and classmates who feel the same way I do and we share each other's culture.

More than anything, I think this project has helped me to let out all the pain that is inside me. Both years I wrote stories and poems about the war, about my angry feelings, tragedy, and suffering. In the project, we could talk about problems at home and school and the other kids and adults understood how it feels. I have nothing to hide now. I talk very open.

I am sorry that this project is over because there is no more money. While we were in the project, nobody dropped out of school but now a few have dropped out already. Some kids went back to their gangs but not me. But I still miss meeting together.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF NATASHA SMITH

Hi. My name is Natasha Smith and I'm 12 years old and in the sixth grade at Northwood School in Anchorage, Alaska. I would like to share with you about what Very Special Arts means to me.

I have been going to the Very Special Arts Festival since I was three years old. In 1991 when I attend the festival it will be 10 years. I like the puppet shows and the music the best.

Last year at my school my class had an artist from the Very Special Arts Festival and she let my class do clay pottery. Then she let us put it on display during the festival.

I go to the New Visions Dance class and all the kids with special needs have lots of fun. They teach us how to move and how to dance like professional dancers.

The Very Special Arts Festival and New Visions Dance class let children with special needs, like me, participate in the arts. It makes us feel good about ourselves because we can be a part of the arts. It doesn't matter what kind of disability we have, we can still enjoy ourselves.

Thank you for listening to my letter and thank you for inviting me to come to Washington D.C. for National Children's Day.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SHAWN LAWSON

The Malvern Public Schools Peer Counselor Program has been active since 1974 when school authorities requested a Teen Involvement Program be started in the Malvern School System.

These counselors are carefully screened, drug free, have satisfactory grades and are well rounded students with a determination to defeat the drug problem.

To negate the idea everyone uses drugs, Peer Counselors serve as positive role models for the younger students to promote the drug free messages.

Peer Counselors receive approximately 32 hours of training by attending the Governor's Youth Conference in the summer, attending REACH training and monthly training sessions by the high school drug coordinator, Wanda Williams. The 120 peer counselors from grades 8-12 are assigned to elementary classes where they present monthly class sessions for students K-6. In these visits, the counselors try to create lines of communication so the students will feel open to ask questions freely. The counselors also play decision making games and activities that demonstrate the importance of individual values, sound decisions and positive self-esteem. Factual drug information is also presented in a non-emotional manner and activities for a drug free lifestyle are offered.

Since drug use is beginning at much younger ages, the counselors try to encourage decisions of non-drug use before these youth are pressured by their peers to use drugs.

Drug use is not the only factor the Peer Counseling group focuses on. The counselors confront many different problems of youth today, such as, suicide, teen pregnancy, and family problems.

What makes our program truly successful is dedicated leaders and the youth. The student leadership in all youth programs is the key to the success. The elementary kids listen more attentively to the peers around their own age and older. This awesome combination is what makes Malvern Peer Counselors an excellent program. The Malvern Program has received both state and national recognition as a model peer support program.

By carefully, considering their role as a model, making a commitment, and participating in the program, it is felt that the high school students own position is reinforced. The attempts to guide the younger students in life coping skills and goal setting makes their own values and goals become clearer.

Having a love for children, this was an excellent opportunity for me when I was chosen as a Peer Counselor. I have a feeling of satisfaction knowing that I have made a difference in someone's life. The children look up to us and respect us. Being involved in this program has been a plus in my life and has reinforced my values as a person.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JoELLEN DETERS

Future Homemakers of America is a vocational student organization that promotes personal growth and leadership development for young men and women within the framework of the home economics curriculum. By identifying and addressing their own concerns and interests, members strengthen the family, increase self-esteem, and learn skills for life.

As the only youth-centered leadership organization that focuses on the family, Future Homemakers of America is working to strengthen the family unit. Regarding the increasing problem of violent adolescent crimes, Kent Hayes, co-director of the Menninger Youth Program, recently stated, "We need to shift back to an emphasis in our society on family." Through the home economics curriculum students learn parenting skills as well as child development concepts which can help prevent child abuse by increasing awareness of realistic expectations of children. Knowing what to expect from a child promotes positive parenting and reduces the frustrations that often lead to child abuse. Individual and chapter projects in the area of family communications help youth recognize the importance of family relations.

Along with experiencing the feeling of accomplishment for completing individual and group projects relating to the family and the community, members also have the opportunity to increase their self-esteem by participating in the Power of One individual growth program. Through the Power of One program, individuals identify those areas of greatest importance and turn goals into a realistic plan of action that can be completed in a short time. When goals are reached, FHA/HERO members are recognized for their achievements by local chapters as well as by state and national associations.

As members gain confidence in themselves, they have the chance to help other youth through peer education--teens teaching teens. As well as gaining knowledge in the areas of concern, whether it's managing money, promoting healthy lifestyles, or cleaning up the environment, members also have the opportunity to develop communication and leadership skills by being peer educators.

The key to success in Future Homemakers of America is members who take the initiative to identify current youth issues, and work in cooperation with advisers to plan, carry out, and evaluate meaningful projects. While members work on projects with the chapter, they gain valuable skills for life. Planning, decision-making, goal-setting, problem-solving, and intrapersonal communications are important skills for youth to acquire now and continue to practice in the future as leaders in society.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF BUNTIP BORDAC, COMMON GROUND, HARTFORD, CT

When I first joined Common Ground I never thought I would be so involved. I hadn't expected to enter a life filled with hopes and dreams. Common Ground was a place where a lonely person such as I could find a way to stand and feel confident. While the world is still chaotic Common Ground is like a solution that can help society change.

Common Ground really works by the support that Ellie and Janice gives to all the students. Not only is their commitment heartwarming, it provides a standard for Common Ground students to use in their own lives. Common Ground shows us the importance of communication, public speaking, the ability to speak one's own mind, and to be able to endure a challenge.

All youths have similar experiences and that is what Common Ground focuses on and enhances. It brings everyone closer from the start and progresses over time to create a bond between the students. This ranges from developing self-esteem, self-worth, confidence, motivation, and leadership through the support, compliments, "put ups", and family environment Common Ground offers. All this is only a starting base where I began to grow inside. It helped me cope with society which I couldn't quite understand. I had made many new friends whose smiles had brought laughter to me and the confusion that was once inside me had vanished. There are many other feelings which could not be written down on paper, but could only be felt inside the heart.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TINA FRANKLIN, COMMON GROUND, HARTFORD, CT

Life in these United States for many teens can be very difficult. Problems of drugs, alcohol, peer-pressure and parental neglect are big issues to deal with. It is also apparent that racism is on the rise in our youth. Since my generation was born after the turbulent years of the 1960's, they do not feel or comprehend the struggle that took place so that we would not have to fight one another. Proper educational skills and leadership skills are sorely lacking in today's schools, leaving many wondering if America will be able to compete in the new global marketplace. If so, will there still be those who will not take part in all of the prosperity? The "Me" generation of the 1980's demonstrated this society's unfortunate habit of turning the other cheek and looking out for number one. Will there still be homeless people and unwed welfare mothers, forgotten, abandoned, and looked upon as "freeloaders"? Will drugs continue to plague our nation and destroy its citizens? What about the Savings and Loan crisis? What happens now? These and many other questions are not easily answered by adults, not to mention young people.But our parents and other elders expect us to take over where they left off almost as soon as we hit high school, even sooner. But if we don't know what's going on and they can't tell us, we won't do a good job.

Fortunately there are programs and clubs out there to help youth while they help themselves and others. Common Ground is such a program. Begun by the Greater Hartford Leadership Forum and Leadership Greater Hartford, Common Ground brings together high school sophmores and juniors from eight high schools from five surrounding Greater Hartford towns.My interest in the program came when, as I read the program's brochure, I saw the section about meeting students from other schools. Race relations have always been very important to me , and because I've only been exposed to my own race.I really wanted to be involved. The program's objective was to break down racial barriers while learning valuable leadership skills.The first activity was a trip to camp. While we were there,we learned about trust and teamwork. We met every Wednesday and learned about public speaking, organization, planning in groups, and meeting deadlines.We all had something valuable to contribute and everyone was important.We also had a main project that dealt with public service. Students donated time, clothing and food to neighborhood shelters. We were also able to get our classmates to contribute to our project. All of this was done by students who had never seen each other before and who were from totally different backgrounds. Common Ground showed me that different people are basically the same and that with them I must learn to grow up and take my rightful place in this society.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF JANET RAMIREZ, COMMON GROUND, HARTFORD, CT

I do not understand -

Why ignorance is seen as innocence?
Why we don't learn from the misfortunes of others?
Why life is so unpredictable?

But most of all, I do not understand

Why white is white and black is black?
Aren't we all the same - individuals with morals and values?
Why, then, can't we be at ease with each other?

What I understand most

Is the present. I seize the pleasures of the present for I can not foretell the future and on the past I do not dwell. My care is not so much to live long as to live well.

The above poem is a written reflection of how Common Ground has inspired me. Participation in the program is not only a great learning experience but very rewarding too. Common Ground has made my experience a satisfying and rewarding one by showing me that success is a matter of choosing something to do, concentrating on it by doing what has to be done, and making a commitment to pursue it to the end despite of how long it may take to see the end results. Common Ground allows students to build their confidence to do anything they can imagine with a sense of their own place in history, in culture. It has encouraged me to explore topics beyond the confines of my tradition. Since then I have learned more about people from totally different cultures.

Common Ground unites students from different schools and neighboring towns and shows them to seek and demonstrate academic strength, personal integrity, and seriousness of educational purpose by involving the students in community service projects which range from helping the homeless to addressing the issues related to the needs of today's children and youth. The social and economic problems which affect everyone within the community are discussed. Thus, ideas are exchanged and a primary goal to help others is set. After practicing problem solving the students are exposed to first hand community service where all the students work together for a single cause. The close knit family atmosphere, extensive offerings in leadership skills, and the availability of a truly supportive mentor make Common Ground an appealing program.

On the whole, Common Ground exists as an entity to individual human beings to think and learn how the world, pressures, and environment have changed over the centuries. In other words, Common Ground is aiming to help "today's leaders and tomorrow's achievers" perceive things differently by having a community of mentors and students, thinkers and scholars seeking to understand the world and its inhabitants in all their complexity.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LATASHA KING, INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM, SAVANNAH, GA

My name is Latasha King. I'm a resident of Savannah, Georgia, where I'm a senior a Savannah High School. I'm also presently employed by the Savannah-Chatham County Board of Public Education where I'm a student-secretary. I'm here today to represent the Independent Program on which I've been an active member since the fall of 88'. The independent Living Program does exactly what it's title says and that's basically to give young adults such as me or those teenagers who are preceding into adulthood, economical, social, and employmental guidance when they become independent.

In our dicussions in Independent Living Program, we focus on terms such as goal setting, behavior and attitudes, responsibility, self-esteem, values, teen sexuality and many more vital subjects that maybe no one took the time out to discuss with teenagers like me. The Independent Living coordinators aren't the only ones sharing their ideas, the participants also voice their opinions on specific topics. Of course, all of those terms are important, but the most important one or the first priority would be to set goals. Setting goals is so important in our shifting society where it's basically every man for himself. Setting goals is the first step but one must strive to accomplish his/her goals.

The Independent Living Program attempts to emphasize the fact that we teenagers are at that point in our live where we're responsible for our decisions and actions, where as in the past someone else was responsible.

ILP sponsored Youth Conferences to exciting places such as Ebenezer located in Rincon, GA where the guest speaker was the very inspirational Glenn Hester, author of "Child of Rage", who spoke on the problems of dealing with anger, abandonment and loss-issues all foster children have in common. This past summer the ILP sponsored a second trip to St. Simmon, GA where the guest speaker was Dr. Otis Johnson-Director of the Youth Futures Authority, the theme was "If it is to be it is up to me" and Dr. Johnson gave us some very enlighting thoughts and facts of historical perspectives of Blacks in society.

ILP stress self-esteem - a belief in yourself as a worthy person and in your goals as possible to achieve. Self-esteem makes a difference between achieving those goals and not even bothering to make an effort to achieve your goals. There were instances when circumstances may have prevented you from uniting with your biological parents or guardian, but the Independent Living Program stresses to teenagers that we are now that stage of our lives where we should and must be in control to determine our future.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JASON VIGNA, NEW LIFE CENTER FOR MEN, ST. SIMON'S ISLAND, GA

The first program I went to was Turning Point. This was a regular treatment program in Moultrie, Georgia. This program was a good basis for my way to recovery. It taught me about addiction and how to live out your daily life drug free. We had Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous meetings each day. We attended school there and met new people. I stayed there for six weeks and then graduated. I left there feeling good, but I was sad that I could not go home.

Next I went to a state funded group home called the Broken Shackle Ranch. This was a program for people who did not have homes or who have been in trouble. This program was pretty well maintained. It was structured well and was very disciplined. I went to school there and maintained my share of the chores. I stayed there for six weeks, but it was not the program for me. I did not make any meetings and I finally ended up slipping back into drugs when a boy snuck some in. I decided that I needed to go back to treatment. I went back to Turning Point for two weeks. In this time I got my feet back on the ground. I attended meetings and got back into a positive environment. After two weeks they felt I was stable, so I was off to another program.

Last I went to New Life Center for Men. This was a Christian program. This was the program for me. I went into the program willing to receive information about my drug problem. Day by day we studied the Bible. I learned something new every day. During the week we worked to raise money to keep the place going. We had support groups, Bible studies, classes and many other events. We also learned how to have fun together. We shared there, played basketball, ping pong, and many other exciting things. Best of all, they taught me how to live out a daily life without worrying about drugs. I stayed at New Life Center for Men for nine months. I was then ready to take on the world. I left with a Christian foundation and a love for God.

When I got home there were many obstacles that came in my way, but with the help from God, there was not anything I could not do. I now rely on church for my help. Also with the help of N.A. and A.A. meetings I am able to stay clean. It is also important for me to maintain a positive environment with clean friends and a lot of encouragement. I feel that life is worth living off drugs. I feel I can make a difference now. I hope my testimony will reach and touch someone so that they do not have to go through what I went through. Drugs are a dead end.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DEE DEE BONNER, EXODUS CITIES IN SCHOOLS, ATLANTA, GA

I had always heard that good things come to those who wait. When I left school, I waited, and waited for some of those "good things" to come my way. I had it set in my mind that I had outgrown school and all of its trivial problems. My whole day was spent thinking of ways that I could avoid going to school. I had become a "skip school mastermind." I went virtually unmissed by the teachers. I finally realized that I was only hurting myself by not attending school. I ended my year and three month "wait" when I registered at Richs' Academy of the Exodus Cities in Schools Program.

Richs' Academy helped me, as well as others realize that we were somebody. We all come from different backgrounds and different family environments. Some of us have been in and out of trouble. Some of us have had children before we, ourselves were old enough to understand the concept of our own lives. Exodus took us as we were. They did not condemn us as countless others had done. They helped us. Never once did they tell us that our lives were too tangled to be straightened out. Exodus gave and is still continuously giving us the love, motivation, and devotion that we need to keep going.

Unlike the school that I previously attended, Richs' Academy has that homey kind of environment. You get the attention that you need and the independence that you want. The teachers are not only professional teachers, they are also expert counselors. Any problem that you have, be it big or small, you are certain to get the listening ear that you need. To the Exodus staff, this is not just a job, therefore they put there heart in everything that they do.

I can remember when I first came to Exodus, I was depressed. I had to deal with the suicidal death of a very close friend. Needless to say, I did not know what to do. I had so many emotions inside of me that they would often have my mind wandering away from my school work. I was not labled a "troubled" student as I would have been in my previous school. Instead, I was pulled aside and asked what was wrong with me. I was not ready to talk about it then, but when I finally was ready, everyone was there for me.

Exodus is not just for the youth, it is also for the parents. To see your child walk up on stage and receive that diploma that neither of you thought she/he would ever receive brings tears of joy and hope to parents who had all but given up on their child.

There are so many students who can look back and say, "Where would I be if it were not for Exodus? I wonder if I would still even be alive." Thanks to Exodus, we are no longer the down trodden youth of today, but a vision of hope for tomorrow.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ANGELA PATTERSON, PROJECT SOAR, MARTIN, GA

Before I explain what Project SOAR means to me, let me tell you a few things about my childhood.

My parents were seperated when I was five years old and were divorced when I was seven. After this time, I was placed in three different foster homes. At the age of ten to thirteen I lived with my father.

During the time I was with my father, he remarried. We moved to Germany because he was in the Army. It was while we were in Germany that I saw my father drunk every weekend. It was like I was living with my stepmother during this time, not my father. He didn't know I existed. My stepmother would compare me to my mother, and tell me we were both very bad people. The torment was unbearable.

My father would never listen to me when I would tell him what she was doing to me. He would just close his eyes like nothing was happening. My father is the kind of perso who likes to put things off on other people. He can't handle his own problems. I was one of his problems I guess, because I was put off on everybody else. During this time, he never once hugged me or said, "Angela, I love you." How I longed to hear those words

To shorten the story, from Germany we moved to California then to Georgia. It was after we moved back to Georgia that my mother realized what was happening to me. Mother went back to court to get custody of me. She and I moved in with my grandparents that live in Franklin County. This just happened a little over a year ago.

Last year, my school counselor suggested that I join Project SOAR. She said this would give me a chance to work with other young people with similar problems. It would be a peer support system for me.

Support groups, such as Project SOAR, help teens everyday. Groups like ours let teens know that when no one else will listen, our members will. The people that are in SOAR are not afraid to let others know how we stand on substance abuse and other problems teens go through. SOAR is not just a group of kids getting together and talkin about what we are against, we do something about it. We show people we are not just going to sit back and watch our peers' lives go down the drain.

Our SOAR Drama Team and Speakers Bureau was established for public awareness on drug and alcohol abuse and other youth issues. Through these means, we show how peers can help peers, how communication is so important whether its with parents or other your people, and how important it is for communities to take a stand against drug and alcohol abuse.

The value of the SOAR training sessions is unmeasurable. The sessions on self-este communicating with parents, how to be a member of a support team, how to be a good listener, and how alcoholism and drug abuse affects the whole family was so important to me. I learned, I grew as a person, and I was able to help others through this opportunity. Every time I listen and try to help others, I learn more about myself. I've learned that I am an important person and that it's up to me to reach my full potential. By helping others, keeping a postive attitude, and continuing to learn I am achieving this.

Project SOAR has been a positive influence in my life. I am so thankful for the opportunities I have had with the training sessions, drama and speaking before groups. A year ago, I would have never believed that Angela Patterson could stand before hundred of people and perform and speak. A year ago, I thought my life was over. How very, very wrong I was. I am somebody! I have alot to offer others. Through my travels with SOAR, I have come to learn just how caring and supportive people can be - if you'll let them. I wish all young people could have the opportunities I have had. So many lives could be changed if young people could be a part of a support team.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SUZANNE RIVET, MASSACHUSETTS YOUTH NETWORK

The Massachusetts Youth Network (MYNET) of the Massachusetts Office for Children was created in November, 1988 to promote youth participation in community-based health promotion efforts. The project was designed to complement the efforts of a statewide teen pregnancy prevention initiative, the Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Challenge Fund. The model embraced by the Challenge Fund is based on the belief that each community has its own unique issues and concerns, and therefore, the most successful way to reduce the incidence of teenage pregnancy in a given community is to challenge individuals concerned about the issue to come together in coalitions representative of all sectors of the community.

MYNET works primarily with communities that report the highest teenage pregnancy rates in the state to empower teenagers by teaching them effective advocacy techniques; creating opportunities for youth to become actively involved in the issues of their community; encouraging and facilitating communication between adolescents and adult policy makers; and affecting policy decisions that impact teens. MYNET also functions as an information gathering and sharing vehicle regarding youth-led initiatives throughout the state of Massachusetts and organizes statewide youth leadership activities and opportunities.

MYNET is goverened by an advisory board comprised of adults and youths. This board is ethnically, economically, and geographically diverse. In addition, there is a Youth Board to the Massachusetts Youth Network. The members of this board represent the communities identified as "at-risk" for teenage pregnancy. The youth help plan and implement activities.

The philosophy embraced by the Massachusetts Youth Network is that adolescents need to feel that they are accepted members of their communities. Young people who do not have access to personally gratifying roles often experience frustration and alienation. These feelings may manifest themselves through behaviors such as truancy or dropping out of school, early sexual activity and pregnancy, substance use and abuse, violence, and vandalism. Therefore, the most defensible prevention strategies are those that offer opportunities for youth's involvement in conventional activities and interaction with members of the community. Through such opportunities, socialization patterns can be changed prior to the occurrence of risk-taking behaviors.

MYNET and the Challenge Fund are under the auspices of the Massachusetts Office for Children (OFC). OFC is the "watch-dog" for the children and families in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. OFC licenses and monitors day care services, as well as promotes prevention servcies and access to services for children and youth.

I would like to share an experience with you that I feel is the greatest explanation of why my program is effective.

"Excuse me - I heard what you said before about being willing to listen if we had any problems, I was wondering....you see I have a baby and I am very scared. My parents want me to get married and my friends want me to give him up. I do not know what to do. I feel so alone. I do not know how to be a mom- please can you help me?"

Her eyes were quickly filling with tears as she expressed her fear and confusion to me. She could not have been more than thirteen or fourteen years old.

"Of course," I said "I am really glad you came to see me. You have already taken the first step by asking for help. Why don't we sit down and talk about what we are going to do. You are going to be okay."

Good morning, my name is Suzanne Rivet and I am a representative of the Massachusetts Youth Network. The story I just told you occured when I was attending a conference at the springfield Boys Club with several members of the network. We had just returned from a workshop where we were asked to briefly explain our programs. Grateful for the opportunity to promote awareness of the network, I explained that the Massachusetts Youth Network of the Massachusetts Office for Children was created in November of 1988 to promote youth participation in community based health efforts. The network is goverened by a board that is ethnically, economically, and geographically diverse. This advisory board is comprised of adults and teens who work together to plan and implement activities. Their philosophy is that adolescents need to feel that they are accepted members of their communities. The network promotes this feeling by: urging adult groups to include teens in their work on teen issuesn, by organizing events for teens to speak out and meet their peers from around the state, going to schools and community groups to teach teens how they can be a part of government and influence adult decision makers, and providing information on legislation and other issues that affect teens.

The most effective philosophy promoted by the network is " YOU'VE GOT THE POWER! " That statement was brought to life before me when that teenage mother asked for my help. I realized that I do have the power and I can make a difference!

Lighting one candle cannot stop the darkness but it is our only beginning if we are ever to see the light. People who work in programs like the Massachusetts Youth Network are everyday lighting that single candle.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SONNY PHAM, MONARCH HOUSE, HONOLULU, HA

"Where My Future Began"

My name is Son Ngoc Pham, but everyone knows me as "Sonny". I am sixteen years old. In this paper I will share my personal history, how I came to live at Monarch House, and how the Monarch House program has given me opportunities I never dreamed of. I hope that this paper will help the U.S. Congress to better understand one of Hawaii's successful programs for youth, and to also realize just how important quality programs are to the youth of America.

I was born on October 25, 1973 in Saigon, Vietnam. My father was a soldier with the U.S. armed forces and was killed in 1974. My mother then raised my younger sister and I. At the age of ten I fled from my country because my mother wanted the best for me. I made it, but my mother and sister were left behind. The fishing boat I was on eventually arrived at an island called Galang in Indonesia. I lived there for two years in a refugee camp waiting for an American sponsor.

In 1985 I was sponsored by my "auntie" and came to Hawaii to live. Her expectations were quite high, and it became impossible for us to live in the same house. She didn't want me to live with her anymore, so in 1988, at the age of 14, I left.

I lived from house to house, and on the streets for about eight months. Sleeping in cars and stairways was no fun. I was working three jobs and going to school whenever I could.

Then one day I was arrested for driving a moped without a license while delivering pizza. I was under age and my "auntie" disowned me, so I was put in Detention Home where I stayed for one month.

Next, I was given a State social worker who placed me at the Central Oahu Youth Services Association (COYSA) temporary shelter. I was really happy there, but one day my social worker came and took me out of class. She told me I was going to the Child and Family Service (CFS) boys group home.

When I first got to the CFS Mon ch House I was still in shock over leaving COYSA, but after a couple of weeks I really began to love it. It is just like a home to me. I can go to regular school, earn weekly allowance, and I even get personal birthday and Christmas presents. But it's not just material

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things that I get from Monarch House. The staff here treat us a lot better than most families treat their own children. They make me feel very comfortable and wanted.

We have a very good social worker at Monarch House named Lorraine Stryker. She works closely with each one of us. She helps us with personal problems, finding a job, school issues, and anything else we need to become successful people in the house here and when we go out on our own. I am a senior in high school, but thanks to Lorraine, today I registered at Honolulu Community College in Electronics Technology. I don't know what I'd do without her. She finds resources and opportunities for me and the other boys we could not find on our own.

For example, while staying at Monarch House I got to go to Winner's Camp with the financial support of Campbell Estate. I am also enrolled in the CFS Refugee Progam. I have a counselor there named Dzac Pham. He helped get my alien i.d. card, a job at McDonald's, and my college books paid for.

Recently, I also had the opportunity to go to the Hawaii Youth at Risk 10-Day Course. Part of that program is "committed partners" for the youth. My committed partner is a police officer. He got me interested in a Boy Scouts program called "Law Enforcement Explorers".

In conclusion, the CFS Monarch House program has given me many opportunities that I am grateful for. It has changed my direction in life, as well as the other teenagers that live here. As for me, I see a future ahead of me which I would never have created if it weren't for this program. Monarch House has given me "once-in-a-lifetime" experiences... like going to Washington, D.C. as a Youth Ambassador!

I hope to locate my mother and younger sister someday, and bring them to America. It is a wonderful place.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JODY HANS LAMMEL, EAGLE SCOUT, FALLON, NV

THE ADVANTAGES OF BECOMING AN EAGLE SCOUT

I definitely appreciate the advantages of becoming an Eagle Scout. For instance, just yesterday while I was filling out a job application, I came upon a question that asked for any extraordinary awards or achievements that I have earned. I was quite proud to state that I was one out of the one-hundred boys that start scouting to earn the Eagle Award.

Anticipating that I will enter college to study biochemistry I have been viewing scholarship applications. Much to my delight they also ask for special awards like the job application. I am happy that I can state that I am an Eagle Scout and am sure the applications will be viewed favorably.

Finally, the earning of the Eagle Award has given me the confidence to survive everyday life. The knowledge that I have received through earning the various skill awards, merit badges, and my leadership training has been advantageous to me. I appreciate the skills that the Boy Scouts of America has so happily provided for me. I am much more effective as a leader than others. I have had opportunities to experience things they haven't.

Yes, I am proud I'm an Eagle. I am also glad that I had the support I needed to achieve Scouting's highest award, The Eagle Scout.

MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS AN EAGLE SCOUT

Recently I have had a lot of responsibility pointed in my direction. Some examples of these responsibilities are:

In my school and community: Approximately four or five months ago the State of Nevada had a mock earthquake drill. I was asked to lend my expertise to my school for the event. At its end I was recruited to be on a unofficial emergency medical team that would be used in extreme emergencies, such as the earthquake. Also five of my seven teachers look to me for leadership in some of the classes more difficult activities. In the community I have been asked to place old Christmas trees into Lake Lahonton as shelters for young fish. I have aided in the Christmas tree lighting ceremony and festival for my home town at the request of Mayor Bob Erickson.

In my troop: Within my troop, there isn't much I haven't done. I attempt to be a good example for the younger Scouts. My job is to show them what a scout should do and be. I enjoy my responsibility.

In my family: I feel this question is misleading for my responsibility to my family hasn't, and shouldn't change with the reception of an award. You should always treat your family with the respect they deserve because they will always be there for you.

WHY DO I WISH TO ATTEND THE 1991 WORLD JAMBOREE

The opportunity to attended the World Jamboree in Seoul, Korea would provide a chance to learn foreign customs and traditions. These customs and traditions could only be learned by experiencing them first hand.

I feel that I would develop more outstanding leadership skills. The person who is exposed to the best that Scouting has to offer becomes more like the best.

I know that if I were to go to the World Jamboree, I would be able to bring back my knowledge so I may share it with others. I ask, how many people get a chance, like I have been given, to go to a foreign country and share their knowledge with boys from around the world? I accept the challenge.

I believe that the World Jamboree was designed for the purpose of Scouts to have fun, learn of the surrounding world, and enjoy the friendship with Scouts of the world. Only an event such as the World Jamboree could provide an atmosphere where such things will be accomplished.

Finally, I know that if I am selected to represent our Council at the Jamboree that I would "do my duty to God and to my Country" and bring credit back for the United States.

Thank You for Your Consideration;

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WINTER ELSEA, TRANER PROJECT, RENO, NV

I was an abused child, and was abandoned one month after my ninth birthday. I was in the third grade, and my classmates would make fun of me because my homelife was different. As I got older, I determined that I was equal, and that all children should be treated equally, regardless of race, age, or socioeconomic status.

Last spring Traner Middle School's morale and self-esteem was almost non-existent. Our school was being badly abused by the press and was being looked down upon by outside communities. The School Board had comprized new zoning for middle schools in Washoe County. Newly zoned families were upset that their children were to attend Traner. Articles were written, and hearings became unruly. I became very angry that a community could look down upon an entire student body because it was in a low-income area, and because over half of the student population, (52%) was minority.

During this time when students gathered to talk, it wasn't about who saw the Cosby Show on T.V. last night, it was about more serious issues. The issues concerning the students of Traner were now focused on the criticisms and accusations of our school being a drug and gang-infested school. This was simply not true. I decided that I had listened to these accusations for the last time without doing something about it.

I asked over two-hundred and fifty students two questions:

1) Did they like Traner?
2) Would they be willing to work to change Traner's image?

Only three said they didn't like Traner or said that it didn't matter. This encouraged me more than ever, and I asked nine students to represent the rest of the student body to help change Traner Middle School's image.

We named our group Project Traner, and I started working as hard as I possibly could. I talked to students and faculty members to find out what they thought could be done and should be done about the problem we were facing. I also had several interviews with the local media, Channel 2 and 4 News, and I wrote a letter to the editor of the Reno-Gazette Journal emphasizing the good aspects of Traner. This letter was printed. A special presentation was arranged for new students coming to Traner. Parents were invited. Traner students (107) paired with new students for lunch, orientation, and early registration. We put on a skit entitled "The First Day of School". Bonds formed student to student. Fears diminished and the idea of forming a united school didn't seem so insurmountable.

Morale and self-esteem began to soar, and students began to enjoy coming to Traner, and felt proud to be a student there. Students thanked me in a lot of ways. I felt proud that I successfully taught them the lesson that I had learned four years before, that everyone was equal, no matter what they looked like, how old they were, or where they went to school. All youth are important to the future of our country and should be encouraged to do what they think is important, whether it be encouraging youths to help an at-risk school, or creating a program to help students anywhere reach their full potential, and enable them to do their very best at anything and everything that they do.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF ALBERT HAFER, BABES PROGRAM, GOLDFIELD, NV

The program I plan on talking about is Babes (Beginning Alcohol and Addictions Basic Education Studies). This program is directed toward children ages 3 to 12. The program uses 7 puppets and each puppet is different in their own way. The puppets are Buttons & Bows, kittens from a troubled family; next is Myth Mary, a squirrel who repeats everything she hears whether it's true or not; then Early Bird is of one's actions, reveals consequences; next is Donovan Dignity, a representation of wisdom and gives Myth Mary the real scoop on information she gives that is wrong; then comes Recovering Reggie who is a cross addictive dog on the road to recovery; and finally, there's Rhonda Rabbit who is in a home where drugs and alcohol are used. She gets very confused and has a hard time making decisions.

Through the Babes family, children learn stories that deal with feelings, coping with situations, how to ask for help, peer pressure and dealing with it, self image, what to do when facing alcohol and drugs and where to get help.

The characters grow and mature for each level of a child's development. These concepts can be shared with children from the U.S. to Guam to the Phillipines to South America and lastly Africa.

The characters are always the same so other children can tell each other what they learned from the same stories and can share them. It builds self-esteem. It gives children the tools to handle everyday problems and gives them the weapons to do more than "Just Say No". It guides them and opens doorways to ask for help and to learn how to handle different situations.

The program offers more than most programs that are set just for certain ages brackets. Babes does not cost an "arm and a leg" like many other programs that aren't quite as effective.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID BAILEY, HOMEWARD BOUND, RAYMOND, NH

Hi!

My name is David Bailey and I'm twelve years old. I live in a trailer park in Raymond, New Hampshire with my mom. We have had a lot of problems with fighting and yelling at each other. I also had a lot of problems at school with answering back and not doing my work. My school counselor talked to me, and Mary from the child protection office talked to me. Everyone, even me, was afraid I would go into a foster home or keep getting into trouble and go to court. I didn't want those things to happen. Mary from the Youth Services got HOMEWARDBOUND for me and my mom.

HOMEWARDBOUND sent Pat LaPointe to our house. Pat was able to talk to my mom. That was good because my mom couldn't go to an office because she can't drive. Also my mom has a hard time speaking English and Pat learned to understand her from coming to the house and having coffee with my mom. Pat saw my mom during the week and she also saw me at home with my mom and took me out too like to McDonald's so we could talk alone. It helped a lot when we went back to the house because Pat helped me explain to my mom how we could get along better. My mom also does not have much money and we didn't have to pay for HOMEWARDBOUND to come to our house. My mom also liked that we did not have to go to court. I liked that I did not have to go to a foster home.

After HOMEWARDBOUND family therapy with Pat I was able to work better with my school counselor. It feels good to know how to ask for help with problem instead of letting them get worse.

I am doing great this summer. The Youth Services got me some day camp. My mom and I do better together. I will get together with my school counselor this year. I'm glad HOMEWARDBOUND and Pat came to help us because we would be doing worse without them. We know we were lucky to get free help to come to our house.

I learned from Pat that I am a good kid who was just dealing with some problems, and I am not a bad kid. Pat helped us to know that we are a loving family who do care about each other and there is nothing to be ashamed of just because sometimes things got bad and we had to work on a lot of problems.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SARAH LATHAM, PARENT/CHILD MEDIATION, CHESTER, NH

Parent/Child Mediation of Rockingham County is a county funded free service available to families who are having communication problems. This program offers a third person to look at the family from a neutral view point and allow for ideas and suggestions that are equal to each person in the family. They deal with the family as a whole; like it should be.

After the tears, shouting, doorslamming and leaving home my parents and I had called it quits. We then began mediation to not only stop the fighting, but because we wanted our family back.

At first, I refused to go because I thought it would be like counseling; someone would be telling me what to do. The mediators were not like that at all, our mediators never set anything in stone, and made clear that a family was like a two way street. These wonderful people never picked sides, but offered suggestions and compromising ideas. They always left the final decision up to the family.

After attending mediation for close to a year, our family made an amazing turn around. I was able to get to know my family all over again. We were able be honest ard up front with one another and began to trust each other again.

During mediation my life greatly changed, not only because family relationships had improved but I became pregnant. I had this awful feeling everybody was going to leave me and that all the work we had done would go down the drain.

Thanks to God and mediation, my family and boyfriend did stick by me, our family became stronger and worked hard to overcome the situation. We all worked together to keep communication lines open. Someone was always there to look after me.

Mediation not only brings your whole family together, but allows you to be your own person and think for yourself. You are able to bring all your dreams and goals together and try to fulfill them, knowing if you fail , you can fail with a positive attitude.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SAUNDRA BRIGGS, APPALACHIN MOUNTAIN TEEN PROJECT, TUFTONBORO, NH

I am Saundra Briggs. I live in a very small town in central N.H. called Tuftonboro. I just graduated from Kingswood High School and I am currently working full time in the clothing business. Two days ago I turned nineteen and I am realizing that being a young adult in today's society is not easy and that we need the help and guidance of programs like the Appalachian Mountain Teen Project(AMTP).

I was introduced to the program three and a half years ago when I was in the tenth grade. A friend suggested that I talk to Donna San Antonio, the organizer of the AMTP. Since then I have been an active youth leader in the program. I was sure glad that I became part of the AMTP. It helped me turn all my negative feelings into something positive and helpful.

Being a child was not easy either. I grew up in an unhappy, hurtful environment. Family members treated me and my brother with indifference and sometimes, violence. It wasn't unusual to be batted around just for being outside too long or standing the wrong way. I felt I was only there for them to blame and vent their anger on. I thought that every child was supposed to be treated that way.

I was always strong and had the will to fight, but I was withdrawn. It took a while for me to come out of my shell. It was hard for me to relate to people because I didn't think they would know how to handle someone with a bad family life. I had real low self esteem and absolutely no confidence in myself or my abilities. I didn't like being that way. It just came naturally--until the tenth grade. When I became part of the AMTP my life was only going to get better.

The AMTP is a program for "at-risk youth". Kids that have family struggles, school troubles or problems relating to others, are considered for the program. They are in the program to build self-esteem, to accomplish something, to feel good about themselves and most important, to turn negative experiences in the past into strength and resourcefulness in the future. The program helps you realize that there is hope in what seems like a bleak future. It helps us bring our real selves out in the open and grow like we were intended to grow--confident and happy.

I have been on many adventure trips with AMTP leaders, Donna San Antonio and Holly Manoogian, each one helping me be who I am today. For the first time in my life I feel well put together. The first long trip I took with the AMTP was a 30 day trip to Montana. Along the way we stopped in various towns to do community service projects and meet local people. Everyone seemed to take an interest in us. We also spent time backpacking and white water rafting in Glacier Park and visiting some of the famous places in the USA like Niagara Falls and Mount Rushmore. This was the experience of a lifetime and something really special for someone like me who had not been anywhere.

Along the way I was learning about myself and how to be a good youth leader. I like the togetherness you get on trips when the older teens and the younger ones can all relate to one another. It was a good feeling for me to be able to be there for them when they needed to talk or someone to be with. I felt a sense of accomplishment because the younger kids feel relief to have someone not too much older than them who understands what they are going through.

Just wanting to help younger kids wasn't enough. We had to learn about confidence, personal feelings, what to do in a sticky situation and how to relate to kids with a sense of responsibility. Sometimes it was tough being a youth leader but it helped me to like myself and to have confidence in my abilities.

The program is successful not only because the adults who run it know what they are doing, but also because children who have been ignored too long really want to change their lives. The AMTP knows what children need and that's another reason why it is successful.

My hope for children to come is that they become a priority in our hearts and minds. Programs like the AMTP are needed as an outlet for all the frustration they feel. I want for children to grow up confident and hopeful. If they have this hope they will always strive to better themselves. I would like to go to Washington to let people there know that children need recognition. If we don't get the attention we are craving for it will be too late. We have to make everyone hear our call for help. I want the Congress to know that up and coming youth need more than they are getting. It is not enough to simply be alive. We want to be healthy too.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JANE COX, ODYSSEY HOUSE, HAMPTON, NH

Odyssey House is a well structered safe home with lots of support and positive peer pressure. The age range is 14 to 16 years old. Kids run the house, cook the meals ,clean the bed rooms , do the launory ect...

The house runs by levels , the first level is pretreatment. At this level you have absolutly no responsibilities , exept to followhouse rules and do what your told. You have no privilages either for example you can not have hairspray, makeup, jeweiry, letters, pictures, ect. the reason for this is to find out who you realy are . The reason ther are no letters or calls from family and friends is to learn to work on strictly your self , this level last 7 to 14 days. to get out of this level you need to earn a MAC a MAC is a group were you pick a person from each level to be in the group. You prepare food for these people and all sit in agroup setting and tell your life story as far back as you can remember until now. At the end the people you picked to be in the group decide whether you should move to the next level. One way to distinguish this is if you were honest and proved that you were commited to changing your life and tried your best.

The next level is freshman. At this level you gain more responsibilities you are to make sure all trash cans are emptied and clean , to be a positive role model and to inform all residents when they are wanted in acertain place, so if a staff member wants every one in the house to go to the livingroom the fresh man goes room to room and says "house to livingroom". The freshman privilages are hairspray, make up , letters from immidiate family 2 limmited a week same with calls they are screened by a senior or staff and a 2 hour visit with parents.

The next level is sophomore. Your responsibilities are, to be responsible for everything overall. This means all things such as toilet paper, toothbrushes, and cleaning supplies. You are to keep all these things in a designated closet which is to be kept clean at all times. You have to answer phones, make sure the house is clean at all times, make sure the bathrooms are stocked, and be responsible for all forms in the facility. Privileges include unlimited posters and tapes, a radio, 3 phone calls in and out, 3 letters in and out, and two extra sets of clothes.

the next level is junior. You are responsible to run the house and make sure every one is doing their jobs. You are also a head of all jobs around the house and you do a census run every hour, call of the role , adress the room, and teach and work with lower levels. You need to build positive relationships and go to a.a. the privilages are go on home passes, unlimited unscreened calls and letters un peered visits kitchen privilages public schooling drivers ed and pass money.

The last level in the house is senior. At this level you make plans to go home or to a foster care depending on your situation, you have to get a job, continue to work on positive relationships, your allowed to hang around unscreened friends, and dating privileges.

before i came to odyssey I started to use drugs and alchonol every day and acid and speed i was 12 when i became addicted i never came home at night i broke in houses to support my haobit. I stole my dads car fought with my parents if i didnt steal acar i hitchiked I snoplifted on adaily bacis . soon as school started i was always getting kicked out i had straight f's . They took me out of mainstream and put me in a emotionaly disturoed class wich happend to be all males the class hada lock up closet were you go if your bad soon i got expelled . the next year i went back to the seventh grade for the second time and got expelled two months later. then i was getting arrested for snopplifting,breaking and entering.

i have been at odyssey house for 6 months not only have i been straignt 6 months i go to a.a. and have found out why i drink and begun to work on that. ways that i work on that is attending therapy group twice a week a.a. once a week and private therapy once a week womans awareness group once a week and talk to a staff memeber when ever i need to. i have now become closer to my parents than i ever imagined. when i came to odyssey house 6 months ago i was in seventh grade and i didn't know my time tables now i'm a freshman sophomore in high school taking advanced classes and also involved in the joo corp. program, school newspaper,and academics honor roll.because of odyssey house i plan to move on,stay sober,go to college and become a therapist or a lawyer.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF VANESSA DONATELLY, ONION RIVER CROSS ROADS GROUP HOME, VERMONT

Onion River Cross Roads is a Group Home for Displaced youths. Some people believe it is the youths fault or that they are the perpetrator for the displacement. That is not so. Most youths have been physically, mentally, emotionally, and sexually abused, or they have problems in school, in the community, at home, with peers, and with authority figures.

Jeff and Michele Bogus are certified Family Teacher from both Easter Seals and Father Flannagan's Boys Town. The Bogus' are very special people, who are willing to give of themselves to work with youths who have been neglected, abandoned and abused. Together with their full time assistant Suzanne Stone and their part time assistant, they provide consistent love, care, and teaching. Family Teachers act as "parents" for the youths in their care. They use unique learning opportunities of the home and the rural environment to teach many skills to their youths in a way that is effective and enjoyable. The desirable outcome for many youths is that they return home or go into an independent living situation. In all cases, it is important that the youth be given a chance to generalize the skills and concepts he or she learns in the other setting. Home visits, parent training, and developing independent living skills are used to effect a desirable outcome.

The program consists of self government: learning responsibility; leadership; and fairness, a motivation system: the youths earn their regular or special privileges by practicing social, maintenance, and academic skills, as youths demonstrate higher levels of skills, they progress through different levels of responsibility.

Onion River has helped me learn responsibility, self-care, appropriate age activities, peer relations, self-esteem, and independent living skills. I believe in the Onion River Cross Roads Group Home as a positive reinforcer. I believe that I would not have been able to be where I am now, living on my own, being independent at my age. I have grown as a person, because of Jeff and Michele Bogus. I have also learned to bond with parent figures, due to their care, love and support.

I do not believe that Onion River Cross Roads should change in any way. I believe that any change in this particular program will do more damage than good. Because it is already the healthiest environment, that it could be, there are wonderful people working on the staff. I believe that youths that move into that home have a fair shot just like the youths that have been there for a year or so. It is a very comfortable situation considering that it is a Group Home, my opinion, it is the best. I am currently in the Spectrum Independent Living Program to fulfill my independence appropriately.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF STACI YOUNG, TEEN ISSUES PROGRAM, HARDWICK, VT

The ground floor for the Hazen Union School Teen Issues program was founded by a coalition of three Lamoille county schools and Hazen Union, located in Caledonia county. Working with these area schools were: The LINK board, Teen Pregnancy Task Force, Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse, and Founders Hall.

The Teen Awareness Day occurred October 4, 1989. Teens from the schools above chose two work shop presentations that they wished they could attend. The workshops offered were: AIDS, Career Decision-Making, Loving, Losing and Letting Go." Papa Don't Preach" - A look at teenage sexuality, patterns of family abuse, say yes say no peer pressures, substance abuse prevention and teens talk about suicide. Parents were invited to attend later on during the day. The program ran from three p.m. to eight p.m. Evaluations and feedback from this day and the many contributors who helped made the Teen Issues program in the local schools a reality.

With Teen Issues supervisor Ted Beery, The Hazen Union Teen Issues program coordinated a Drug, Alcohol Awareness week from May 21-25, 1990. The group meets weekly and discusses issues that effect us and our peers. The meetings are very informal and almost appear to be a rap group at times. The meetings are always a lot of fun!

The eleven assemblies presented that week were: Roles in an Alcoholic Family, Living in an Age of Chemical Dependency, a series of plays on alcohol abuse and peer pressure, a panel of inmates from a local correctional center talking candidly about their experiences, ending with a guest speaker from S.A.D.D.

The immediate response from this week was a significant increase in the group's attendance. Long term effects cannot be calculated yet for the program is only one year old.

Teen Issues is working towards meeting Hazen's needs and students' needs by providing a place were people of all grade levels (7-12) can go and talk about any topic that concerns them or someone they know. Everything discussed in the group remains in the group and a trust between the participants is formed. An additional result of the program is the increased availability of information to teens and the community. There is a general feeling within the group that issues can be discussed and dealt with.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF EBONY EVANS, YOUTH PRIDE ORGANIZATION, ST. CROIX, VI

The National Parent's Resource Institute for Drug Education, Inc., was founded in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1977 and today offers a comprehensive range of drug prevention programs and services to parents, youths, and community organizations and educators throughout the United States and nine other nations. PRIDE offers intensive youth training programs known as America's PRIDE.

PRIDE has successfully completed, or is currently fulfilling contracts for the U. S. Department of Education, the U. S. Information Agency, the Agency for International Development, the Office for Substance Abuse Prevention, the Army and other federal agencies. In Networking America's communities against drug abuse, PRIDE has been at the fore front for a dozen years. The PRIDE network includes more than 70,000 leaders of the anti-drug movement throughout the nation. Towns and countries using the PRIDE Community Model have shown that adolescent drug usage rates can be lowered by enacting sound and systematic prevention and education strategies based upon evaluation and performance.

The PRIDE World drug Conference is the largest gathering of drug prevention specialists in the world."

Our Virgin Islands PRIDE is very unique. A year ago, we had our Pride Retreat which included students from St. Thomas and St. John. We also had a group of trainers from the mainland. During that weekend we attended several rap and training sessions. We learned how to overcome peer pressure in our efforts to live a drug free life. PRIDE builds up morality and integrity in a more positive manner. During these training sessions, we learned how to communicate by dancing, singing and acting with our peers and parents, teachers, brothers and sisters.

Since then, our PRIDE group launched an anti-drug campaign carrying our message "SAY NO TO DRUGS, YES TO LIFE" by performing at civic organization functions. Our weekly meetings continued and we conducted our first Talent Show where all our PRIDE members, through singing, dancing and acting, carried the message by living a DRUG FREE LIFE. We tried to instill in our friends that there is more to life than drugs. Our organization has strengthened our moral values, confidence, and assurance, by showing that in living a drug free life, we can achieve. "Tomorrow will bring a better place, a better me." But this can only happen by working together towards a better world. We have to show the children of today that they are our future, and that's why it's up to us to give them a brighter tomorrow.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF THAIREN GREENE, QUEEN LOUISE HONE FOR CHILDREN, ST, CROIX, VI

November, 1989, marked the 85th Anniversity of the Queen Louise home for Children, a non-profit shelter established in 1904 to provide a loving, secure environment for abused and neglected children of St. Croix, Virgin Islands. The island at that time had been colonised by the European country of Danmark, and serious efforts were made to address conditions of proverty and their effect on children. Those efforts continued after the United States purchased the Virgin Islands in 1917, and as a result, hundreds, perhaps thousands of abused and neglected youths have been housed at the Queen Louise Home. If it were not for the services rendered at the home, these children's chances of survival would have been severely limited.

At the Queen Louise Home today, children still come to find a loving and secure environment, a place where their medical and emotional needs can be met. Infants are cared for around the clock in the Queen Louise Home nursery, while older children live in small family groups in cottages spread around the shady five-acre campus. A variety of educational and recreational programs are provided for the children at every age - the building blocks that help them learn and grow.

On St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, there is a growing problem of crack addiction amongst child-bearing women. As a result, many children are being born addicted to crack and require special medical attention. Also, widespread abuse and neglect of children by their crack-addicted parents often leads our local Department of Human Services to intervene on their behalf. Many of these children are referred to the Queen Louise Home, where they stay in a sheltered environment until such time as they acquire the skills to make it on their own.

The Queen Louise Home is one of several programs sponsored by the Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands. Other programs are Teen Hotline, free and confidential counselling for teens in need, and Deaf Line, help and counselling for the hearing impaired. As a non-profit organization, Queen Louise Home depends on donations and volunteers to stay afloat. The Queen Louise Home has worked hard to develop a local sense of participation and responsibility where our children's welfare is concerned. As a result, the list of donors and volunteers from the community is endless. Many high-school related organizations have volunteered to assist at Queen Louise Home in variety of activities including working in the nursery and afternoon tutorial programs.

All of our efforts stem from our belief in the children of our community, as we believe that the [illegible] children in their hour of need.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MORIA PERRY, TEEN HOT LINE, RICHMOND, VA

The Fredericksburg Area Hot Line has just recently been forutnate enough to open another phone line called the Teen Hot Line. As I had been working with the Fredericksburg Area Hot Line for almost a year, I was able to devote part of my time to setting up and anwering the Teen Hot Line.

The Teen Hot Line is the true example of teens in the community helping others of their age and I would like to explain how it works. It consists of two separate parts; the teenagers who provide their time and services and those who receive help.

All teenagers volunteering for this program must be ready to give it their all. Any prospective volunteers must first attend an interview to determine if they are responsible enough to dedicate their time to this organization. The training consists of first thirty hours of lectures in a classroom setting and then sixteen hours of observing listeners on the phone. The classes and observation sesions are both conducted partly by teenagers who are already working with either Fredericksburg Area Hot Line or Teen Hot Line. The teen then becomes a full-fledged listener. These listeners will give referrals or use a reflective listening process to help the teen in trouble to solve his or her problems. Listeners do not give medical, spiritual, or legal advice; they just listen and reflect back in more concise terms what the caller is trying to express. When the problem is too specific for the listener, then, as they have been trained, he or she will refer the caller to another community service which would be more able to help. After a call, I find that I usually run the gamut of my emotions from feeling like a great help to worrying if the caller will follow up on a referral.

The teenager who calls Teen Hot Line will find the phone answered by another teen willing to help them through their problems without telling them what to do. Because the Teen Hot Line is a confidential and anonymous service, the caller does not need to worry about being the brunt of cruel gossip and rumors. This confidentiality allows the callers more freedom to discuss their problems. Hopefully, the caller will hang up the phone feeling more confident and relieved.

Teens helping teens is what the Fredericksburg Area Teen Hot Line is all about. The success of this program depends on the listener and the caller to take the initiative to solve the problems facing the teenagers of this age. The Teen Hot Line addresses any problems in a teenagers world. If anyone should understand our youth and their problems, a listener on the Teen Hot Line should. We have stepped out our own little worlds to dedicate time to helping others of our age.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF FRANCES CORNIEL, GOVERNOR'S PEER LEADERSHIP COUNCIL, LAWRENCE, MA

I represent the Governor's Peer Leadership Council, which is a group of 32 peer leaders throughout Massachusetts who advocate for peer programs aimed at preventing alcohol and other drug problems. Members of the council represent over 5000 peer leaderswho are active throughout the state. We are sponsored by the Governors Alliance Against Drugs and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

During the past three years the Governor's Peer Leadership Council has worked with peer programs locally and regionally to develop a strong statewide network of peers preventing substance abuse. The Council publishes a newsletter, sponsors regional meetings and legislative days and supports the work of local programs. The Council played a major role in planning the Fifth Annual Statewide Peer Institute which provided an opportunity for peers throughout the state to address common concerns and formulate effective strategies for the prevention of drug/alcohol abuse.

Peer leaders are young people in schools and communities who are trained in many different areas including alcohol and other drugs, AIDS, depression, suicide, dating and sexuality, eating disorders, violence prevention, multicultural issues and children of alcoholics. Peer leaders provide positive role models and education for their peers and younger people in order to help promote healthy behaviors among youths. Peer leaders serve the community by presenting health education in classrooms and community settings, holding small group discussions, providing big brother/big sister programs, staffing resource rooms, presenting community awareness programs, and advocating for youth concerns.

I am from Lawrence, a high risk city, and my peer leadership program was started in 1986 as an after school program which focused on alcohol and drug abuse. Now it has changed considerably. It is offered as two five credit courses and an after school program for freshmen only who have had peer leadership in the middle school.

Peer leaders at Lawrence High are very effective because we receive 108 hours of intensive training. Our peer leadership program is involved in many different groups throughout our community. One of them is the C.O.A. group, which is children of alcoholics. There are six C.O.A. groups in the middle schools which are led jointly by a peer leader and guidance counselor. Because children of alcoholics are three times more likely to become alcoholics, these groups are essential in breaking the cycle. We also have five peer leadership programs in the middle schools themselves, each led by a peer leader from my high school and two teachers. Sixth and seventh graders are trained to go into third and fourth grades to educate students about drugs and alcohol. Peer leaders in my school are also very active in working in the D.A.R.E. program.

Peer leadership has been the greatest experience in my life. I have learned about myself and others. Peer leadership changes lives, and mine is not the only one it has changed. The reason I know peer leadership works is because a fourteen year old boy told me that a pusher in the neighborhood tried to sell him drugs, and he said "no". Peer leadership has reduced the demand for drugs, and that is success.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RACHEL STANSBERY, YOUTH ACTION COMMITTEE, IOWA

Good day, Ladies & Gentlemen:

My name is Rachel Stansbery, I'm a senior at Ames High School, and I appreciate this opportunity to speak with you. I'd like to begin my testimony with a short fable.
Once upon a time, there was a man standing on the bank of the river. As he watched, he saw a person crying out for help, obviously drowning. The man immediately jumped in and pulled the falling victim to shore where a crowd had gathered to congratulate him. Suddenly more shouts were heard, and he found himself jumping in to save another victim. Again, he pulled the person to safety. As he was catching his breath, after his heroic deeds, yet another person appeared in the water This time, however, instead of jumping in to save the person, the man turned and proceeded to walk up stream. The crowd ran after him, pleading with him to stay and help. "How can you turn your back on this situation?" they asked. The hero's response, "I'm too tired to save anymore drowning victims. I am going to go up stream and teach those people how to swim".

I use this fable to illustrate a point: If we teach youth how to make good decisions early in life, the chances of them "drowning" is decreased significantly.

Research consistently indicates that young people with high self-esteem, positive life skills, and a supportive environment are much more productive members of their community. It's no mystery that people gravitate and bond with other people/groups that make them feel good about themselves. The difference between those young people who become assimilated as opposed to alienated to their community can be narrowed down to four feelings: belonging, status, competency and power = their behavior.

First, belonging is the perception that a person is included by people they respect and are respected by in return, youth join street gangs and scouts for the very same reasons. Within these groups, young people need to gain, the second feeling status, a recognition of their existence and their efforts. Thirdly, young people need skills and opportunities and the competence to test their abilitites. This fosters the confidence they will need to carry out their responsibilities as adults. Last, but not least, youth need a feeling of power - not a power over others, but a power within themselves to make decisions which have a positive impact in their lives.

These four "feelings criteria" are necessary components in helping youth build a state or bond with their families, communities and country. This bonding serves to then facilitate those behaviors found in responsible citizens. I represent a group of youth called the Youth Action Committee (YAC). It is a Prevention Program sponsored by Youth and Shelter Services, Inc., which encourages and helps youth enhance these four feelings.

Our major project has been the writing and editing of the Youth Rights and Reponsibilities Handbook. By working with judges, legislators and lawyers, we researched and compiled the information needed for young people in Iowa to make informed and responsible decisions.

As with all sound prevention programs, this project was both a process and a product. The product was the 10,000 books distributed to youth throughout Iowa. But it was in the process that we - committee members - found ourselves the proud owners of the four feelings mentioned earlier.

My goal today is to encourage you to help other youth experience this prevention process. Prevention is not just one program for any one group, of youth it is found in many forms. It is Campfire, hot lunches, and quality daycare. Prevention is 20 children in a classroom, not 30. Prevention is early education about substance abuse, Aids and civic responsibility. Prevention is allowing every young person the opportunity to become a productive and contributing member of soceity. Prevention is providing the structure to grow and develop into capable coping adults. Prevention is not a fable, it is also not free. It certainly can't cost us anymore, however, than overcrowded prisons, welfare rolls, and the lives and productivity lost to substance abuse.

I encourage you to look at the big picture in which prevention is a key piece of the puzzle. Of course, there will always be a few who drown, but these numbers will be fewer if we only make the investment of the time and money it takes to teach young people to swim.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JENNIFER LYONS, DOLLAR-A-DAY PROGRAM, WATERLOO, IA

I am a teen mother and I represent the Dollar-A-Day program in Waterloo, Iowa. Dollar-A-Day is designed specifically to help girls like me, and it has been very successful. There are approximately twelve (12) girls enrolled who all began before or at the age of sixteen. All are at high risk for an additional pregnancy, so this program utilizes positive peer pressure to its advantage. Once each week at an hourly meeting you receive your seven dollars and a lot of helpful support. See, if you were to become pregnant again, membership ends automatically. There aren't any pregnancy tests just trust, it's based wholly on honesty.

I believe the reason the Dollar-A-Day program is successful is because all of it's attention is focused on prevention of another pregnancy during adolescence. There are few requirements, with the program being very informal and non-threatening to the teenage mother. The program's success is not based on the money alone. A lot of these girls don't have many chances to be with other girls their age, so this hour is something for them to look forward to each week. The Dollar-A-Day program helps them to mature emotionally, promotes easy access to the health care system and community resources, and gives them the opportunity to remain in school.

In summary, the Dollar-A-Day program has been exactly what I've needed being a teenage mother. I've also witnessed the program's effect on the other teenage mothers in the Waterloo community. Knowing that this program is in it's initial stages, and observing it's success's so soon, leads me to believe the potential it has is abundant. The Dollar-A-Day program within the Waterloo community is doing it's part in combating multiple teenage pregnancies.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RAYMOND BANKS, YOUTH HOMES OF MID-AMERICA, DES MOINES, IA

Youth Homes of Mid America is a non-profit youth services agency located in Des Moines, Iowa. The agency was founded in 1943 by Hobort and Alta Ross, as a residential treatment facility for adolescents.

Youth Homes began with one building but currently consists of one residential treatment campus made up of 4 cottages and 4 group home placements.

Youth are referred to the agency by their social workers. The agency then makes subjective decisions based on the youths social history, past behaviors and attitudes and how well they would probably fit with the established group. The agency has no rigid guidelines on accepting youth and has worked with everyone from foster children to murderers.

Youth Homes of Mid America has no magical formula for helping youth. What it does have is the basic fact that the people who influence youth the most are the ones who work with them the most. As a result of this the youth homes agency has historically invested in the very best online workers. It is these workers that have been the cause of the continued success of youth homes of mid-america. The youth homes have made a point of trusting the input of these workers and knowing that their ability to role model is a major influence on the youth.

Unfortunately things are not as good as they seem on the surface. A resident counselor at youth homes is paid less than a garbage collector even though youth homes employees are better paid than any other agency in the state. We pay people more to take care of our livestock than we do to take care of our children in need. This is a direct result of a complete lack of commitment and funding on the part of the government. Children are the future of our nation, by this lack of commitment the government is saying that it does not care about our children and subsequently that it does not care about our future.

There are only two things an agency needs to be successful. One is the highest quality on-line workers and resident counselors they can find. It is these people who will make the difference in a childs life. The second is an agency must have adequate financial support, without proper finances the youth can not get the help they need and deserve.

In closing I want to emphasize the fact that there is no one plan or program that helps youth more than any other. What ultimately is the reason for a childs success in any program is the ability of the on-line workers to role model and teach the youth.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TRYGVE THRONTVELT, DRUG ABUSE RESISTANCE EDUCATION, ST. PAUL, MN

D - A - R - E.

What does it mean to you? To be bold. To have courage. To face the challenge. These are the attributes a person needs to resist drugs. We as children need to dare to face the challenges our society presents to us.

In an urban setting children have to deal with stress due to all the different aspects of living in a big city. There are racial and social class differences, income levels are many and varied, and the haves and have-nots are very evident while walking down the city street. The media flashes images of simple objects that have become symbols of status and power. All of this leads to crime and corruption and above all, drug abuse.

More and more, today's urban children are facing greater and greater pressures, not only to use drugs, but to lie because of drugs, to steal because of drugs, even to kill because of drugs. Alchohol has become the number one killer in the U. S., and the number of [illegible]

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disease due to cigarettes is staggering. Lots of risks. Many challenges.

There are many factors that contribute to children getting involved with drugs; loneliness, low self-esteem, difficulties in school, abusive parents, and parents who use drugs. Another, maybe even the biggest contributor, is peer pressure. When children with low self esteem, and who have found no strength within themselves or no support groups from without, are faced with peer pressure to use drugs, they may easily succumb. This is why we need to build self esteem, happiness, and a sense of security in children. I am happy to say there are programs such as D.A.R.E., DRUG ABUSE RESISTANCE EDUCATION, which help in this task. Programs such as this should be expanded to reach all children. The world's drug problem has to be resolved and I hope people will have the courage to dare to set things right. After all, it may save a child's life.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF STEPHANIE WANDENBERG, PEER COUNSELING, BALTIMORE, MD

Growing up in today's world is difficult. It requires a great deal of emotional stability and strength. As we all know, many of us do not have the emotional stability. More than likely, we need someone to help us out, since we have the ready access of drugs and alcohol, split up families and competition for college. Teenagers are under a lot of stress and often need help with these problems.

I have been a peer counselor at Perry Hall for one year. Our peer counseling program is a very effective way to reach out and help troubled teens. There are about fifty peer counselors at Perry Hall. We meet in small groups each week for training sessions. In these sessions we learn how to communicate more efficiently, listen closely, and be open with our feelings. We have been trained in grief counseling, suicide, awareness of drug and alcohol abuse, date rape and other problems facing teenagers such as male-female relationships.

A primary reason why our program is so successful is that teens really talk to their peers. We, as peer counselors, are trained to reach out beyond our own peer group to others who seem troubled. The peer counselors are selected by peers and faculty. This way, we know that they are open minded and will not scare other students. Peer counseling addresses the need of having someone there to talk to that will be objective. As peer counselors we help by giving teenagers options to pick from. We provide alternatives along with a different perspective and positive reinforcement. It helps instill security and provides an extension of the Guidance Department. A peer counselor usually turns out to be a friend.

Peer counselors usually know the other peer you are having problems with and have heard both sides of the situation. This could help you out a great deal. Or maybe they have already dealt with a problem you are a going through. If they have dealt with it, they could explain to you how they coped through the situation and the outcome. Peer counseling enables students to come to someone of their own age to help them through a rough stage in their lives.

Peer counseling has been very rewarding to me. It has taught me to listen carefully and watch your body language. As a friend and a peer counselor, I feel as if I have helped out many of my friends. I hope that in my last year of peer counseling, I am able to help other peers. Peer counseling has helped me out a lot with dealing with the death of a best friend of mine. Talking to others helped me see that I am not the only one with these hurt feelings.

I am really looking forward to my trip to Washington. I feel as though I will gain a lot. With more knowledge, I can help more peers.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ALYCIA TOMLINSON, REGISTRY PROGRAM, SPOKANE, WA

One year ago I was a Junior at North Central High School in Spokane, Washington. Like many students my age, I gave little thought to planning what I would do after I left high school. I had hopes and dreams, of course, but I had no specific goals and no idea how I would fulfill any of my hopes, until I was invited to take part in a program in our community called the Registry Program.

This program was initiated in Washington State four years ago by Pacific Northwest Bell Company and is now supported by U.S. West Communications, a number of local businesses and the school district. Its function is to take minority students like me, who might have the potential to make it in college or vocational school, and it encourages us to find the right school and the right career and to go after them.

The program has many facets, but one of its most important is to pair each student up with an adult member of the business community who we call our mentor. Each mentor-student pair is committed to working together for the two years that it takes to go through the program. The mentor and the student go to workshops and meetings together and the mentor provides a lot of support while the student completes a number of assigned projects.

If the students complete all their projects and attend all the required meetings and workshops, they may qualify for a scholarship paid for by U.S. West Communications and other businesses. This gives the students a lot of incentive to keep going with the program.

The workshops are designed to help us set goals, plan our careers, build self-esteem and improve ourselves in a number of ways. The projects we are assigned involve researching careers, colleges, and financial aid sources.

My mentor is a very special lady who cares a lot about me and sincerely wants me to succeed. Her interest in me inspires me to do well on my projects. In fact I feel as though I would really let her down if I didn't do my absolute best. I have visited her at work to see what her workday is like, and she once spent a whole day at my school to learn more about my school activities and about the school itself. I think we both learned a great deal from these visits. She is always there to help me when I need her, but I am really expected to complete my projects on my own.

Another important aspect of the program is to help us find summer jobs that teach us good working habits and show us what it might be like to work in our chosen careers. I worked last summer in a department store where I learned about merchandising and office work.

The Registry Program has done a lot for me. I still have a year to go in the program, but I wouldn't drop out for anything. I'm going to try my hardest to get into college or a vocational school, because I know how important this is to getting a good job later on. The program has really built my self-confidence, especially in talking to business people. I think this will be a big help when I go for job interviews. It has also helped me to set some goals and it has shown me what I have to do to achieve those goals.

I am really thankful to my mentor for caring so much about me and also to the business people and my school administrators for sponsoring the Registry Program. I hope that someday I can be as helpful to a student like me who needs some support and a little encouragement to keep moving towards a worthwhile carreer.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOCELYN JACKSON, KANSAS TEEN LEADER COLLEGE, WICHITA, KS

I have been involved in Kansas 4-H for 6 years. One thing I have liked about 4-H is that there are a variety of ways that I can be involved and many methods used to teach skills in decision making, self-esteem building, getting along with others, working with groups and serving the community. One program that has been particularly important to me is the Kansas Teen Leader College. TLC is a training series that prepares teens to work effectively with young children, to teach specific skills to groups of children and to serve as camp counselors at day camp and residential camps. TLC begins with a six-hour workshop conducted locally by trained volunteers. This first workshop deals with understanding children age 7 to 12 and the kinds of activities and behaviors that are appropriate for them. It provides instruction in ways to work with children (and others) to build their self-esteem. We are also trained to communicate effectively with others.

Graduates from TLC I are eligible to attend a two-day statewide workshop to get instruction in decision-making with groups and in ways to manage and [illegible] with groups. In addition, we select a subject matter area and receive training in that particular subject. At the completion of this training we are given certificates and engraved name badges to indicate that we are certified to teach and work with young children in 4-H.

I have personally appreciated the skills I gained in both understanding myself and in helping younger children and have really enjoyed working with elementary age youth. I believe I have gained skills that will help me be a better parent and a better spouse, if I choose to marry and have children in the future. I know I am more skilled in working with my friends as a result of this training.

TLC is only one of the many programs offered to youth 7-19 in Kansas through 4-H. We can be involved through family clubs, after school groups, in-school projects with materials provided by 4-H, local day camps and residential camps. We can also choose to attend events that focus on competitive skills as well as events that teach cooperative skills. We can select to learn about any of 60 subjects taught in small groups of six or eight people. These are the groups we are trained to teach at Teen Leader College.

There are also programs that are designed to address specific issues or to meet the needs of specific groups. For instance, the Kansas 4-H CARES program for substance abuse prevention for 3rd-4th graders received 174th Point of Light award from President Bush, and our Capable Kids Can program of self-care skills for children who must stay alone at home sometimes without adult supervision has been used across the state and in a number of other state 4-H programs. A linguistics and self-esteem program for Hispanic children is meeting the need of a specific group in a county with a 64% school dropout rate for Hispanic students.

Obviously, one person can't do everything all that 4-H has to offer. But, because programs are designed to meet the needs of youths and families in the variety of ways these families function and because educational information is available for a wide range of interests, any young person in Kansas [illegible] by participating in 4-H. I know I have.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHRISTIANA BRATIOTIS, PEER ASSISTANTS GROUP, SPARKS, NV

In the early spring of 1986, I uncovered an article on a national publication about the Natural Helpers Program in the state of Washington. As a high school freshman, I understood the great need for this type of program. Inspired by the success of the Natural Helpers in high schools across the United States, I approached my counselor and proposed a similar peer helping program be instituted at our school. With the support and the enthusiasm of our principal, the counseling department, and the faculty, I was sent as a representative of Reed High School to the 2nd annual National Peer Helpers Association Conference held in Fort Collins, Colorado that summer. I was the only delegate from the state of Nevada in attendance.

The conference gave me better information about the various types of peer helping and about the long lasting effects it has on those involved. If parents, priests, counselors, and teachers aren't making the connections, then the obvious solution is to use what already works-Kids. Kids talk to kids. Kids listen to kids. Most importantly, Kids respond to other kids.

I began work on establishing our peer helpers by observing the needs of the students of my high school. Consulting them with the faculty and the administration, a direction for our program took shape. Using peers in a variety of aggressive outreach programs is the foundation of the Reed High School Peer Assistants Group.

The success and stability of my organization can be attributed to the continued support of the administration and the faculty. Having a dedicated advisor, who is an excellent role model, gives strength to our efforts. The completion of a sixteen week training program offered by Community Runaway Youth Services provides necessary communication and human relations skills. Essential to our progress is the student's involvement in planning, implementing, and executing each Peer Assistant project. We strive to provide a "no pressure" environment. Our group functions on an "on-call" basis and Peer Assistants are always available. Highlighting our success is Networking. Networking is an interconnecting system between students, and between students and faculty. Networking provides a ripple effect that is the safeguard against negative situations in our school. Extending the Networking process, we have begun to assimilate students whom Peer Assistants have aided. This lengthens and opens our channels of communication. As a result, we have bonded toward our common goal, "kids helping kids!"

The Reed High School Peer Assistants Program is multi-faceted, and includes a New Student Orientation Program, involvement in Wellness Week, Buddy Program for At Risk students, aiding the counseling department in dealing with potential teen suicides, raising our own support funds, and donating gifts to Committee to Aid Abused Women. Our program will be enhanced this year with the addition of a Walk-In Information Center.

Out of my concern for and realization of the wide-spread struggles that face American youth today, I have accepted the challenge of dealing with my peers. I have met this challenge by establishing the Reed High School Peer Assistants Center.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF PAUL E. GARCIA, AIC PROGRAM, DENVER, CO

I, Paul E. Garcia, will describe what the AIC program is, what did for me and why it is successful. It will also consist of me of my ideas why I think the program works.

AIC is a voluntary community based program for youths sixteen d older. The program first starts you out on an outward bound rsonal challenge trip. Every student has to go through an outward und trip in order to be in the program. AIC helps students hieve a lot of goals such as achieving a GED and receiving cational training. All of the AIC students attend Drug/Alcohol oups along with anger control groups. All students have to earn eir privileges such as going to school or work, doing chores and aying drug and alcohol free along with no AWOLs. All of these ad up to home passes.

AIC really did a lot for me mind wise. I understand a lot re about being an adult and responsibility. When I was at AIC, I complished a lot of my goals, some of those goals were achieving GED and getting off drugs. I remember when I wasn't getting ything accomplished, I would always be getting stoned or drunk, I uld miss a lot of work or school because of a hangover or some her excuses just to get high. AIC turned all of that around for . They taught me how to take control of my life and they gave me lot of encouragement that I never had before. I find myself a lot re motivated in doing things, like holding down a job and handling money wisely. I always knew life wasn't going to be easy but AIC de me realize it. They taught me to do things for myself and to the best at whatever I do. AIC also taught me to reach out for lp if I ever need it. Whether it's drugs or just problems, I feel need to get out because it starts to make you crazy if you hold it l inside. They taught me to trust. I feel now I have a future anks to AIC.

AIC is successful in many ways: they help people who help emselves, even the students that don't realize they need help. ey respect all students as adults and try to push them to the best their abilities. You do things you thought you could never do e carrying a heavy backpack over mountains and through valleys ile realizing you're really doing it without stealing or getting o trouble. It's a fun, hard accomplishment learning how to llenge and pushing your own weight, doing things you never did fore such as caving and rappeling and sitting on fourteen thousand pt peaks. The greatest feeling is you worked really hard and hed yourself to the limits, you feel you can do anything. Once 're at the home, they make you feel your part of the family cause they really do care. For instance, when you have a problem can feel comfortable to sit down with one staff and discuss it get out your feelings. AIC really help students accept sponsibility such as making sure they get to school on time, ding down a job and keeping them drug and alcohol free. AIC lly has a great staff because all of the staff are there for the dents, but it's all up to the students whether or not they want accept and appreciate the staffs help and that is whether it's hunting, educational skills or just even to sit down for advice.

The AIC program really does work. It helped me turn my life und along with others as well, from the outward bound trip to ting discharged. AIC is one of the best things that has ever ppened to me in doing something positive with my life.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JEFF HOGUE, ARKANSAS GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL, PINE BLUFF, AR

Arkansas Governor's School is a six-week program that encourages students to study accelerated concepts in their particular area of talent and to learn to use critical thinking to analyze difficult social and philosophical issues. Four hundred of the state's most gifted juniors participate in a variety of activities designed to be thought provoking and at times disturbing. By isolating the unique and intentionally varied student body in an intellectual environment, a Utopia is created in which the only expectation placed on students is mature individual thought. The curriculum is divided into three Areas.

Area 1 is the name for the class periods which focus on the particular subject in which the student excels. Unlike the formal school environment, there are no homework assignments or tests, and teachers encourage students to challenge the ideas they present. The concepts covered are often complex and challenging. For example, natural science classes explore the implications of space-time dilation and the ethics of modern biology while choral music classes perform abstract pieces that involve random rhythms and popping sound effects.

Area 2 is a forum that combines sociology, philosophy, and discussion and debate to develop critical thinking skills. One of the first questions presented to Arkansas Governor's school students in Area 2 is: "What is real?" Is the chair you are sitting on real? If the chair is blue, can you prove that blue exists? What about people who are color-blind? Eventually students realize that the reality is based on each individual's perception of objects around them. If this concept is adapted to ideas, one finds the truth is based on an individual's perception of an issue. Students who accept this view soon realize that no person can be absolutely "right" or "wrong" in their opinions or beliefs. While this may not sound like an earthshaking concept, it sets the stage for students to challenge each other's views on controversial issues without attacking or "putting down" one another. It is important to remember that many students come from isolated communities where one and only one perception has ever been introduced. The topics that arise include racism, morality, and religion. No issue is off-limits at Governor's school, so every student has the opportunity to see completely opposite sides of issues considered taboo in most environments. Thus, students can weigh the arguments on each side, and create informed individual perceptions.

A popular quote on campus is: "Area 2 takes you apart, but Area 3 puts you back together again." Area 3 discusses Freud and Jung but often is simply a forum for students to frankly express their emotions. Confidentiality is a ground rule of the class, so tears and hugs often result.

Arkansas Governor's School is not a "gifted summer camp." Intelligence is not the only prerequisite and fun is not the primary goal. In fact, the movies and speakers are meant to inspire thought, not to entertain. Of course, the creative students use the ample free time to enjoy themselves thoroughly. While playing in mud puddles and dancing in the rain, I made life-long friends who remain closest to my heart. The indescribable closeness of Governor's School friendships can only be comprehended by observing while students and faculty alike get together after the closing convocation to cry and embrace one last time.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PHYLISHA KING, CORNERSTONE PROJECT, YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES UNLIMITED, AND NEW FUTURES FOR LITTLE ROCK YOUTH, LITTLE ROCK, AR

My name is Phylisha King. I am 14 years old and am in the 9th grade at Forest Heights Junior High School. I would like to tell you about three programs I participated in recently.

The first program is called The CornerStone Project. This project is fun in many ways. I think it helps children stay out of trouble when they get out of school. The CornerStone Project is an after-school program, which has a special time set out to go to tutoring. In tutoring, the counselors help you to do any homework that you have. CornerStone is a learning experience. It offers classes that help you learn more about the world and also everyday living. I would recommend that anyone, who had the chance, to be in this program to take the offer.

The second program is called Youth Opportunities Unlimited (Y.O.U.). This is a summer program. I would say that this program is something like going on vacation. You get away from home for 8 1/2 weeks. A bus takes you to a college campus. At the college, you begin your vacation. During the 8 1/2 weeks, you do fun and somewhat not-so-fun things. You go to different places like Magic Springs, Mid America Museum and Six Flags Over Texas. During the weekdays, for 4 hours, you go to school and work. You get paid to go to work and you get credits, toward graduation, for going to school. The best part about this program is that you get a scholarship for college. I think this program was interesting and worthwhile.

The last, but not least, program is New Futures for Little Rock Youth. In this program, youths have a special person called a Youth Specialist who helps them from the grade they are in (7 or 10) throughout graduation. The Youth Specialist helps you to do good in school. This is my 3rd year having a Youth Specialist and I believe that my Youth Specialist has helped me a lot throughout school.

I have told you about the 3 programs I am in. I would recommend anyone, who is willing to be in one of the programs, to go. You will have fun and benefit greatly.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ANDREW GORDON McGINNIS, SMART MOVES PROGRAM, HUNTINGTON, WV

SMART MOVES is a program, sponsored by the Boys Clubs of Huntington, West Virginia, to prevent the use of drugs and alcohol and teenage pregnancy. As a member of the Boys Clubs, I was selected to be a SMART MOVES Peer Leader.

SMART MOVES was introduced at Camp Pritchard, the Boys Clubs' of Huntington three week resident camp, to over three hundred Boys Clubs members, ages six through eighteen. The program is designed to reduce young people's vulnerability to drug use, alcohol use, and sexual involvement by

...teaching them to resist peer, social, and media pressures...

...improving their ability to make decisions, cope with stress, and to communicate...

...giving them accurate information about alcohol and other drugs, and about adolescent sexuality...

At Camp Pritchard, I used the skills I was taught, at the first training retreat entitled Be SMART, to help teach and supervise the campers in the SMART MOVES class. Not only did I receive experience in teaching the different techniques that I had learned, but I also saw that the SMART MOVES program was making a lasting impression on the campers.

My next SMART MOVES effort came at the Start SMART retreat for boys and girls, ages ten through twelve. This was a weekend retreat held at a local hotel. Ten sessions were held within the retreat including sessions on "Good" vs. "Bad" Drugs, Consequences of Drug Use, Puberty Changes, A Friend Means..., Ways of Saying "No", Dispelling Myths, Media Influences: Good and Bad, and Creating Commercials. The next retreat was for boys and girls, ages thirteen through fifteen, and was called Stay SMART.

After attending these two retreats, I have observed noticeable changes in two areas. First, I see Boys Clubs members are getting smarter and are quitting drugs or are completely staying away from drugs. The second change is that alcohol and drug use and adolescent pregnancies are increasing at my school. I know that this would not be the case, if they could be involved in the SMART MOVES program.

The SMART MOVES program and the Boys Clubs of Huntington has changed the way I look at life. I believe it is the best way to "beat the streets".

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WINNETTA ALON EVANS, SMART MOVES PROGRAM, HUNTINGTON, WV

SMART MOVES is a program designed to teach young people how to deal with the pressures involved in "Saying No" to alcohol and drug use and the prevention of teenage pregnancy. The boys and girls, who participate in SMART MOVES, are taught how to handle these pressures and feel good about "Saying No".

Ideals and beliefs have been developed in all of us through SMART MOVES. Those ideals and beliefs have encouraged us to overcome peer pressures and to reach for our goals.

Before SMART MOVES, youth like myself, did not have the training needed to overcome the pressures in everyday life. SMART MOVES counselors always succeed in helping you to believe that you do not have to prove yourself to anyone and ask only that you do the best you can.

SMART MOVES has given me the ability to make the right decisions and has taught me how to communicate with my peers. Most importantly, I have learned to cope with the pressures of my peers which are associated with teenage pregnancy and the use of alcohol and drugs.

The Stay SMART weekend retreat, that I attended, put me into a situation, where I was with counselors I could trust. The retreat was held at a West Virginia State Park, and I found that having the opportunity to be away from the pressures and problems of everyday life gave me a brand new outlook on life. Before attending the retreat, I had problems dealing with my peers and communicating with my parents. The skills I learned at this retreat have aided me in dealing with these problems.

As a youth in need of guidance, I finished the weekend thinking straight and with the right attitude. I know now that "Saying No Is One SMART MOVE".

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARY JANE BOWLES, ACTION YOUTH CARE, PRINCETON, WV

My name is Mary Jane Bowles, and I am fourteen years old. I have lived in three foster homes (two Action Youth Care and one regular Department of Human Services) and one shelter. I used to live with my Mother and Billy C., her boyfriend. I was molested starting the the third grade, until the sixth grade, when I was taken out of the home.

In the future I want to graduate from high school and then go to a good college to be an accountant, work at that a couple of years, and then go back and become a lawyer. I want to adopt two children and raise them in the best Christian environment, with a lot of love I know I can provide.

Action Youth Care has helped me with my life by placing me with loving, caring, kind, and patient families who have supported and guided me in ways that make me feel better about myself and others around me. AYC has forced me to go to those dumb but helpful groups that they have on various topics that teach me things I need to know in life. AYC has helped me get the approval to spend more time with my biological family, and the right to have private telephone conversations with them. Our AYC worker meets with me and my Primary Treatment Parents on a regular basis to talk about things that need talked about. They have staff and families who really care about us, and they help us deal and cope with problems and find better solutions to them as they arise. Action Youth Care has helped me by doing their jobs, plus my Department of Human Service worker's job in many matters, including my adoption.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LATRISHA KIRBY, SALVATION ARMY WHITE SHIELD CENTER FOR TEEN MONS, PORTLAND, OR

The program I represent is the Salvation Army White Shield Center for young Teen Moms. This program is designed to help Teen Moms learn new and better ways of parenting their children. While we are here, we also attend parenting classes and group therapy to deal with frustrations and problems of the past which might interfere with our lives today and parenting skills.

During my stay here at White Shield, I have learned new ways to get along in the society of today. We have a group here called Positive Peer Culture. In this group we learn to confront our peers and role model in a healthy way, even when expressing anger. This group also helps to teach us to identify with real feelings, instead of masking them. We also have a sex abuse group to deal with feelings of victimization and another group called Adolescent Children of Alcoholics or dysfunctional families. This group helps us identify healthy and unhealthy relationships, and gives us a chance to get support and understanding for emotional and physical abuse. In the parenting classes, they have taught me new ways of parenting. For example, we learn how to discipline by using time-out. In this class, we also learn about good socializing skills to use with our children to make our bonds much stronger. We are also offered first aid techniques in this class.

With all that we learn here about parenting and our issues, we all should be great leaders for the future. So should our children.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PERRY MOSNGON, DRUG FREE PROGRAM, ROTA, N.M. ISLANDS

The Rota High School Drug Free program is a many faceted program involving peer counseling sessions, awards day presentations to the community and guests lectures. At the core of the program is a one day school assembly. The students conceive plan, and execute a wide variety of activities which are intended to engage the students in thinking about a drug free lifestyle.

Students need to be heard. One of the biggest problems we face is the student's perception that no one listens to them. Our program involves the use of a student survey. This survey is conducted anonomously prior to the assembly to have details and accurate information on current local problems involving drugs. Conditions in the school environment can change rapidly. Letting the students speak out openly, through the use of the survey, allows us to stay current on what the students perceive as problems. This also gives the students a sense of control over what is done at the school.

Another important aspect of the program is the use of peer encounter groups. After the morning sessions, which involve a multidisciplinary array of activities including, dramatic skits, games, music, and up-dated scientific lectures the students are divided up into groups and encouraged to openly discuss drug problems and solutions. At the end of the day group findings are presented back to the main assembly by student leaders.

The program works for three reasons. First, it is fun. The skits, music and games give the assembly an air of positive energy. Second, it is scientifically accurate. Students research and present the latest information available on the drug problem, both on the medical and social levels. Third, and most importantly, this program is successful because it is produced by and for the students. This is not just another day of adults lecturing children. Rather it is responsible young adults planning and realizing a drug free lifestyle.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ANN SHAI, DRUG FREE TASK FORCE, SAIPAN, MP

One big program in the CNMI is alcohol abuse, even among teenagers. In five to seven years, Tinian will be well known because of the huge gambling casinos which are planned. Then, another big problem may well be an increase in drug use.

So, to help people here to say **"NO"** to drugs and to keep our problems from getting worst, we must inform people, especially students, about the danger of drugs. We must continue to receive funds for information, conferences, workshops, classroom skits, and awareness contests related to drugs and alcohol, such as we had in our school in the past.

In April '89 two students from our school attended a drug free conference in Saipan. In Sept. '89 ten students attended another for 3 days. **We were impressed!** Those who attended, and others, had after school drug awareness activities. We prepared programs to share what we had learned with our schoolmates.

Our task force sponsored a day long drug awareness day for all the high school students. Students put on various skits and informations games. We had guest speakers. One of our speakers is a prisoner here in Tinian. He told us how alcohol **"helped him end up in jail."** That speaker got every student's attention.

To me, that day was worth it because it changed some students reactions and attitudes towards drugs and alcohol, just like the conferences on Saipan did for those who went.

So, Drug Awareness Day, or Week, or all year activities are really worth it. Please help us continue. Thank you for your attention and concern.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SHERRIE B. SAN NICOLAS, STUDENTS SELF-ESTEEM PROGRAM, SAIPAN, NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Two educational programs that I can relate to as very successful learning experiences for students of all ages that can truly be said as programs that work would have to be the Students Self-Esteem Program and the Drug-Free Club Organization.

The Students Self-Esteem Program educates on what are positive and negative self-esteem, enables students on how to gain and maintain a positive self-esteem, illustrates the causes and effects of positive and negative self-esteem.

When I first joined the Students Self-Esteem Program almost over a year ago, I thought I already understood what self-esteem was and what it meant. But I learned later on that it has much to do with my personal opinion, thinking and also my reactions towards certain types of criticism. It helped me to believe more in myself which led me to become a member of the Drug-Free Club Organization or Task Force as we call it.

The Drug-Free Club Organization is basically a group of teenagers comprising with adults such as teachers, counselors, parents, police officers, attorneys, congressmen, health educators, and other members of our society seeking some solutions to help decrease the teenage drug problems that we must face in today's society.

In this organization we learned about the facts on drug use and abuse by presentations from the health educators, police officers, counselors and others who deal with drug users and abusers. We also learned about problems that directly relate to drug abuse such as dropping out from school, developing health problems, lying and stealing as a means of supporting such habits by teenagers with drug problems.

As a member I was able to share my knowledge about it and encouraged to speak openly on how we as teenagers may try to prevent drug use and abuse. I feel that if we can encourage more teenagers and adults to become aware of these problems by sharing real life experiences which some teenagers had in avoiding drugs involvement by learning how to say no to drugs and feel good about ourselves. Only then can we get closer to fulfilling our goal in having a Drug-Free society.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TAMARA JOHNSON, H.L. HARSHMAN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, INDIANAPOLIS, IN

I am Tamara Johnson, an eighth grade student at Harshman Junior High School. I am the third child out of five children. In my spare time I like different types of sports offered through the school such as volleyball, basketball, and track. But in spite of my love for sports, even though I do it on my own, Excel has provided me the opportunities to participate in sports and build these things. I enjoy most of the coaches I have had and the friends I have made on the teams.

Working with Excel is fun for me. I started with the Department of Parks and Recreation in my first summer. One of my duties were to watch over a [illegible] to the park. It was an excellent program because I kept the children out of trouble and I was able to [illegible] at work. Because of this experience I [illegible] as a skilled worker. I found I could relate well to people. I understand where they are coming from and I want to help them improve themselves.

I really enjoy school because I am with my friends and can always make new ones. Sometimes I have fun teachers. I have one teacher this year and she reminds me of my mother. I feel comfortable in her class and want to do well. One of the things that makes school exciting is having different activity clubs, such as Strive 2, computer club, reading, and the math clubs. For those of you not familiar with Strive 2, it is an afterschool activities program funded through a grant that allowed me to have professional teach me such things as modeling, cooking, video production, karate, and jewelry making. With these types of activities I am having fun while learning at the same time. This helps us students have school spirit. Since most kids feel that school is boring, these types of classes help keep them from getting bored because they have something of which to look forward. School is now more of a challenge.

I feel that my best subject in school is math. I was not always good in it, but with the help of my mother, one of my teachers, and much hard work, I now maintain an A average. I feel that I have succeeded because of encouragement from my family and others in my surrounding neighborhood. My friends as well as some of their parents seem to look up to me for some reason I do not understand. This makes me feel proud and makes me want to try even harder to do better. Even this opportunity you are giving me today makes me feel proud and happy with myself. If I can make it to college, that would be great. I may have an even brighter future.

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I think other kids can do just as well as I have, but they do not have the confidence or the drive to do it. One of the reasons is that their parent or parents do not take the time to help them. They do not hear someone say that they can do it only if they try. That's what my mother tells all of us kids. She says, "You never know what you can do if you don't try." Another reason others do not do as well is because some kids have to babysit the young ones while their moms work. They basically run the house alone with no guidance or help. Some kids have parents who are alcholics or are on drugs. Those students have no one to look up to--no one they can trust.

My mother works many hours and is raising us alone but she has taken the time to talk to us and help us with what she could. Some kids have freedom, lots of it, and they run the streets without supervision. This is not good because they can get into trouble running the streets. They have no rules to go by at home and when they are at school they don't want to follow the rules there either. Therefore, they do not seem to want to learn and their actions are disturbing in class to the teachers and other students. This can keep others from learning.

In conclusion, I feel that the main things that everyone needs to succeed are love, guidance and encouragement. I feel I am on the right track. I feel I have a bright future. I am lucky and I am proud.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF MELISSA HAWES, BOYS' CLUB, PASSAIC, NJ

My Boys' Club means a lot to me and to the other children who can appreciate what a Boys Club can offer. I feel my Boys Club and every Boys' Club is a place to meet and greet old friends and new. It's a place to see a friend, be a friend, and play a game or two. It's also a place to learn and explore with a touch of adventure.

I enjoy being there and helping and playing with the kids every day. To most, it's considered a "home away from home", and others say it's a place where future leaders can be raised.

When parents send their kids to a Boys Club, they expect them to have fun, learn new things and get some encouragement to do positive things.

Parents know that a positive "today" can only lead to a better "tomorrow". The Boys Clubs of America can only work for a better "tomorrow".

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARY DAMICO, A-PLUS—ADOLESCENT PARENTS LEARNING USEFUL SKILLS, FAYETTEVILLE, AR

I am part of a teen parent group called A-PLUS. A-PLUS stands for: Adolescent Parents Learning Useful Skills. The program provides all kinds of help for teen parents or teens who are pregnant for the first time. The program taught me how to be a good teenage mother. They had speakers on responsibility and on alcohol abuse and how to play with your child. They had films on discipline methods for children like time-out and re-direction. A-PLUS had volunteers who did not want money. They wanted to help in any way they could. The people who arrange the meeting find great speakers and they get great films. The people give out calendars to tell you the dates and time for the meetings.

The program gives information on:

1. pregnancy, child birth and delivery.
2. parenting, child development and nutrition.
3. family relationships; and last but not least:
4. family planning.

They provide counseling to further education and career goals. The program is for thirteen to nineteen year old mothers or those who are pregnant.

My mother is a big help to me, but sometimes things get tense at home. My baby and I live with my mother and step-father. There were times I felt like moving out and trying to make it on my own. A-PLUS helped me problem solve the consequences of that decision. By talking with staff and my volunter/"special friend", I saw how hard it would be to realize the goal of completing school if I had to take care of my baby by myself plus maintain a separate household. One of the things I have learned from the program is how to be less stressed out.

The way A-PLUS helps me, and others in the program, is by being there. Whether or not I need help, I know it's available. I can always reach a staff person or my "special friend". It also helps to talk with other teen parents in the support groups. When I hear other people are going through the same problems as I am, things don't seem so terrible. I have hope that eventually things will work out.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHARLES SEELEY, INDEPENDENT LIVING, TOLEDO, OH

Independent Living is a program for foster children from the age of 16 to the time the child is emancipated. It is designed to help children live on their own after emancipation.

First, it teaches children through four groups: first the orientation group, designed to teach the child who is entering the program about the program. The second program is designed to teach children about 6 topics mental illness, budgeting, sexually transmitted diseases, drug abuse, insurance and steriods. The third group sponsered and taught by Planned Parenthood is designed to teach children about sexually transmitted diseases, contraception and pregnancy. The fourth group is for children who are in their own apartment and is designed to help them cope with and solve problems that arise while they are out on their own.

Second, as a child goes through the program he is given workbooks that teach the child various things such as career choices, decision making, consequences of bad and good choices, etc.

Third, as a child finishes a workbook or a group he/she is given a certain amount of money that comes from state grants which goes into a stipent account for use when a child moves out on their own for furniture, appliances, deposit, first months rent, 8% of the second month, 5% of the third month and 20% of the fourth month

Fourth, when a new child comes into the program he/she goes through a class that teaches interviewing for a job, keeping a job, and career choices. After he/she completes the class a resume is drawn up and given to the child then he/she is given help with finding a job.

This program specifically address my need for knowledge about budgeting, insurance, good decision making, problem solving, job hunting, my fear of my getting out on my own and not being able to handle it, and my fear of not having enough money to afford the necessitys of life.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF TIFFINEE ANDERTON, EAST CENTRAL YOUTH CENTER, SPOKANE, WA

My name is Tiffinee Anderton. I am beginning my senior year at Shadle Park High School. My past history as a student proves that I have always been active, both as a leader and follower. As a student of Medical Lake High School, I had the pleasure of serving as Black Student Union President for two years and participated on the debate, volleyball and basketball teams.

Because I was able to maintain a 3.0 grade point, I was selected to become a dual enrollment student, which means attending high school a half day and taking course at Eastern Washington University a half day.

I am proud of my participation with the East Central Youth Center. Activities with the youth center have included the following:

- Formation of the East Central Youth Coalition in the spring of 1990. The coalition acts as the young peoples voice at the East Central Community Center. We encourage our peers to create a positive and strong link between ourselves and the city for future enhancements. Although most of the kids here at the center are minorities our values, needs beliefs and dreams are great. I was voted the coalitons first president.

- Youth from throughout Spokane were asked to come together to address youth needs and concerns with The Chase Youth Commission at one of its' youth forums this spring. I was one of the primary organizers and acted as the moderator for the forum.

Participation in the Children's Day Week activities would help a great deal in my future development.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHRIS KLINE, NORTH DAKOTA TEEN INSTITUTE (NDTI), BISMARK, ND

NDTI or North Dakota Teen Institute is an organization sponsored by the Center for Adolescent Development. It is a drug prevention group. During the summer the Center for Adolescent Development puts on camps, one for high school students called TI, or Teen Institute, and one for junior high school students called TIP or Teens in Partnership. They focus on youth empowerment which means no one knows more about teen stresses, pressures, and problems than teens themselves.

NDTI offers support to kids in stressful situations or with problems. An example was last year when I started junior high I was worried about fitting in and being able to keep from drinking. They gave me support by being role models, showing me that I don't have to drink to have fun and by giving me facts which made me not want to drink.

While being in the group, I've had many opportunities to do things such as working at various conventions, working at the airshow and other fundraisers, public speaking, and cross age tutoring. Being in the group has taught me how to talk to and get along with people; older, younger, and people my age. Being in the group has taught me about natural highs. I now know that I don't have to use drugs or alcohol to be on a high.

There are several reasons that I feel the program is successful. One reason is that they provide information on morals, alcohol, and many other things so kids can make better decisions when dealing with their peers. Another reason is that they give the kids ideas on how to make better choices in stressful situations. They also give them support to make going with their decisions easier.

In conclusion NDTI and TIP are programs which benefit the kids and community. The group is wonderful and I hope other kids can become involved in groups like it.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AMY BECKER, CENTER FOR ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT, BISMARK, ND

Today's youth face many critical decisions on issues which will have a direct impact on their future. One of these decisions is the use or non-use of alcohol and other drugs.

The North Dakota Teen Institute, sponsored by the Center for Adolescent Development, provides a camp setting enabling participants to receive information and learn various skills. The topics include community networking, necessary verses unnecessary risk taking, self-esteem, suicide, and the use of alcohol and other drugs. Participants also have the opportunity to build relationships with peers and adults who support a non-use position towards drugs and alcohol.

I feel the success of the program is due to several factors, one of which is the emphasis placed on self-esteem. I believe self-esteem is essential for making healthy, responsible decisions, and that low self-esteem contributes considerably to many problems of both youth and adults in today's society. Another positive factor is individuals who participated in camp return to their communities to share their experience with other peers and adults. The skills learned are put to use through public speaking, planning drug and alcohol free activities, and working with children on issues such as self-esteem. While working on these activities, emphasis is placed on developing a partnership between adults and youth.

The Center for Adolescent Development was selected as one of four pilot sites in the nation to organize a leadership training conference called TeamSpirit. The conference is open to individuals from surrounding communities who previously participated in NDTI to further their skills, and also to those who wish to become involved in the programs. The conference is designed to give participants skills in effective leadership, communication, use of media, and working with others to establish activities which will benefit their community. Examples of this are drug and alcohol free activities, public service announcements and presentations on topics such as drinking and driving, teen pregnancy, or teen suicide. Participants recieve information on the use of seatbelts, effects of drugs and alcohol, and many other issues.

I feel the success of the program lies within the manner leadership is addressed. It was demonstrated that along with the rewards of leadership comes a great deal of responsibility and in some cases, sacrifice. One must be willing to risk sharing ideas and face the possibility of ridicule, make decisions and face criticism, and above all, risk failure. To get a complete picture of what leadership is, one must take risks and endure failure to fully appreciate the rewards that come with successful leadership.

In closing, I offer a challenge. I would like to see all people reach beyond the boundaries of age, race, social class, or anything that may hinder us, and form partnerships in which we can break barriers and grow to our fullest potential, together.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN PIZZO, TEENS IN PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM, MANDAN, ND

I entered the Teens in Partnership program in the summer of 1989,I participated in a week long camp that taught me to help other kids on problems such as peerpressure,self confidence, suicide,drugs,alcohol, and other problems kids face.

Since the camp I have been actively involved with The Mandan Involved Teens a branch of the Center for Adolescent Development.We have been going through the things we discussed at camp, and how we could use that information to help the kids of our community.

This summer I was chosen to go to a three day learning program called H.A.H.E.S.(beginning alcohol and addictions basic education studies) there I was trained to teach about problems like self confidence,decision making,peer pressure,coping skills,alcohol and drug information,getting help,and helping people in a chemically dependant home.We use hand puppets that the kids can relate to,to tell our story.WE have met with the Mandan elementary principals,we showed them our program,and they are planning to implement this program to the first grade level.

I am glad I got to participate in the Teens in Partnership program,it has made me aware of the problems in my community,and im happy to be a part of the people that are making a difference.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ANDREA P. CHARLEBOIS, CENTER FOR ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT, MINOT, ND

The Center for Adolescent Development is a non-profit organization used to enhance teenagers in the issues of chemical and substance abuse, along with leadership skills, self-esteem, decision making, refusal skills, cross-age tutoring, wellness, and other adolescent issues teens are facing in todays society.

The Center for Adolescent Development (CAD) offers a program called North Dakota Teen Institute (NDTI) to help adolescents bring fourth and share their information and opinions about different issues associated with teens today.

North Dakota Teen Institute also has major emphasis on leadership skills. When teens go back to their communities they will be used as role models for the children of the next generation to look up to. Teens will do public speaking, work shops, and cross-age tutoring in order to help steer adolescents into a positive outlook on life.

Every day more and more children are faced with problems they generally would not have known until they were adults. Over 200 teens are arrested for drug abuse, 437 teenagers are arrested for drinking or drunken driving ,and six teens commit suicide every single day!

Every nine minutes a person is killed or seriously injured in a alcohol or drug related traffic accident in the United States.

To me this is all the more reason we need to educate teens and their families about problems we are facing today.

The Center for Adolescent Development along with Teen Institute can be there to help and inform North Dakotans along with others, to be more active in their communities and to provide information, training, and assistance to adolescents and adults about pressures teenagers are facing in todays world.

The things that make this program successful are the people involved in it. The coordinators, volunteer staff, people in the communities, and of course the adolescents the program reaches out to.

Every one working together and helping to educate more teens about addiction and ones own self being is really what the Center is all about.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SHARIFA MEREDITH, ST. AUGUSTINE'S YOUTH ENRICHMENT PROGRAM, BUFFALO, NY

What is the purpose of a sponsoring program? If you looked up the words in a dictionary, you could come up with a definition for a sponsoring program. For example, a sponsoring program is a group of people who are responsible for others and help support them through planned procedures. This is a very technical definition for a sponsoring program. However, St. Augustine's is not a technical program. The purpose of St. Augustine's has been to establish community-based programs that address the needs of young people by giving us an opportunity to understand who we are as young adults. St. Augustine's tries to obtain this purpose by giving us the chance to explore numerous careers through hands-on work experience and by assisting us with college preparation.

Many of the services such as the Youth Enrichment Program (Y.E.P.) and the Agape Youth Work Experience Program gives us the opportunity to explore numerous careers through meaningful first hand training experience. Not only is St. Augustine's concerned with giving us a jump in the World of Work but they are also concerned with our education. For this reason, two programs have been set up. The Structured Educational Support Program (S.E.S.P.) which is designed as a school intervention program for youth who are in danger of dropping out of school and/or failing one or more academic subjects. The School To Employment Program (S.T.E.P.) is for the high school dropout to raise their basic education levels, leading towards a high school equivalency diploma (GED). With these two concepts intact, St. Augustine's is accomplishing its purposes by providing meaningful youth oriented services.

St. Augustine's has been successful in the community because it is producing a group of young adults that will have a positive effect on this community. Again through its many services, it has given young adults constructive positive activities to do after school. It gives us a chance to learn leadership skills that we can take back to our community, we then are able to be mentors to the younger generation following in our footsteps.

I have been a participant involved in the Youth Enrichment Component since I was a Freshman in high school. This component is designed strictly for those youth interested in exploring the medical field. Prior to entering the program, the study of medicine was the furthest thing from my mind. I was always interested in becoming a Airline Stewardess. The Youth Services motto: If You Can Conceive With Your Mind, Believe With Your Heart, Then You Can Achieve It-- made me realize that I could aim higher, and I did. My career goal now is to study the field of Pharmaceutical Medicine. I have had the opportunies to job shadow in the pharmaceutical departments of hospitals and drugstores. As a result I have gained so much technical knowledge and hands on experience. I am now a Senior in high school and through the early start I received from the program, I have been able to structure my high school curriculum toward a Math and Science diploma. I am now in the process of selecting the Univerrity I will attend.

St. Augustine's has given many youth the chance to gain valuable working experience in an area that they normally wouldn't have and to change their thinking and direction. Now they have a clear idea of where they want to go, and how to get there. ~~St. Augustine's Youth~~
Thanks to St Augustines Youth Enrichment Program

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF HEIDI RAMIREZ, MONTGOMERY COUNTY YOUTH COUNCIL, AMSTERDAN, NY

The purpose of the Montgomery County Youth Council is to help the various youth programs throughout the county to improve youth services by promoting youth empowerment and participation. The youth council also serves as the advisory board to the Montgomery County Youth Bureau and advises the Bureau staff on a number of levels involving youth services.

As a member of the Youth Council, I have been involved in a variety of community projects, including public service announcements on teen pregnancy, cross cultural relations, training, volunteering at the office for the aging, Bowling for Kids-Sake (fundraiser for Big Brothers/Big Sisters Program), a youth booth at the Amsterdam Mall, and our most recent project, a county-wide youth opinion survey. I was the chairperson of the publicity committee on the public service announcements, and I actively participated in each of the above named activities, either as a volunteer or peer counselor.

The Youth Council has benefited Montgomery County youth by giving them a voice in youth issues. It is important for youth to know that if they have an opinion about changing issues, there is an active forum in which to get involved. The success of the youth council's projects and activities is evidenced in the large number of opinion surveys we received (over 300), and the high number of youth who attend our events.

The Youth Council maintains its success because it recruits members from across the county, working hard to achieve diversity and cross representation of youth. In this way, it can serve the needs of the broader youth community, rather than a selected few.

The most positive aspect of my experience on the Council has been in developing positive partnerships with adults in the community. These partnerships have given the young people a more positive image and the opportunity to gain knowledge, information, and friendship with the decision makers in our community.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JASON A. NEAL, BROOKHAVEN TOWN YOUTH COUNCIL, BELLPORT, NY

the ages of 13 and 21 who are interested in becoming active in their community and their local government. The BTYC is successful because it provides a vehicle for the thoughts and ideas of youth. This group is able to make a difference because it enables the members,as individuals, to demonstrate their willingness and readiness to assume roles of great responsibility in our changing society.

The BTYC participates in many activities, and cooperates with several organizations in coordinating activities, that directly involve and affect the youth of the town and county. We conducted a cleanup at Lookout Point in Farmingville. We sponsor the Annual Summer's End Youth Concert at the Bald Hill Amphitheater. We participate in the Peer Leadership Weekend at Camp Quinipet on Shelter Island and the New York State Youth Conference in Albany (although we did not have the funds or the transportation to be represented this year, in reference to the latter). We also attend Speakouts and Workshops dealing with Youth Empowerment, Peer Counseling, Peer Leadership, Peer Pressure Substance Abuse, and other topics.

My name is Jason Alexander Neal. I am a 14-year old, 9th-grade etudent at Bellport Middle School, Recently, I was appointed to the Brookhaven Town Youth Board, and I was re-elected as Speaker of the Youth council. As the Speaker, I deal with public relations, (presenting and accepting awards and speaking on behalf of the BTYC), and I hold a position equal to that of the President in stature and prestige.

I am the finance officer for Civil Air Patrol Suffolk Sqadron Ten and I am the champion of the CAP Suffolk County Group Speech Competitions. CAP is the official Auxiliary of the US Air Force. I am an active student in the Science Technology Intry Program at Suffolk County Community College. I am a volunteer Summer Book Buddy at South Country Library in Bellport and I am the liason for the Concerned Students for a Better Bellport, which I founded in 1988 under the direction and advisement of Mrs. Joann M. Neal, my mother.

In November of 1989, I was commended by the Superintendent and Board of my school district for invaluable service to the community. I am presently in the process of creating and coordinating, in cooperation with the principal, assistant principals, and guidance counselors, a peer counseling program at Bellport Middle School.

My motto is: "Look, listen, learn, lead."

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ANGELA RIEF ON BEHALF OF THE NEBRASKA COUNCIL OF YOUTH

The Nebraska Council of Youth, also known as NCY, is a statewide non-profit organization that aims to benefit the youth community of Nebraska. NCY was founded in 1960 as a youth unit of the Nebraska Committee for Children and Youth. At the time of its inception, the organization had approximately 100 members. Since that time, NCY has grown to 300 members annually. Other states began similar youth programs in 1960 as a spin-off of the White House Conference on Children and Youth; however, to the best of our knowledge, NCY stands alone as the only White House spin-off organization still in existence today.

NCY is extremely proud of the fine programs it sponsors annually. Each year 500 delegates from across the state of Nebraska come together at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln for an annual conference that challenges the participants to identify the local needs of their peers and formulate solutions that can be implemented through the organization in the upcoming year. The true success of the conference comes from the diversity of youth in attendance and the various experiences they bring to the discussion table. It is truly a rewarding three days for those youth who go.

NCY also sponsors an annual scholarship program to youth who have served their community in a special way. The NCY district organizations raise money throughout the year and the top award given is $1,000. The program is in its seventh year. Secondly, NCY is the sponsor of the Youth Awareness Forum program, a

program aimed at breaking down the stereotypical walls that exist in the youth community today, and give youth of all different backgrounds the opportunity to share their feelings and emotions. Many youth over the past three years have been able to air their troubles among friends and receive valuable help and guidance from professionals and peers, as well as realizing that they are not alone, and that it is not a shame as a youth to have to admit to having a problem of some type. Finally, an excellent educational function sponsored by NCY is Youth Government Day. During this annual event, students are invited to spend the day at the state capitol and listen to presentations by Nebraska's leaders in government. Topics of timely concern to the state are discussed on a level that youth can relate to easily. It is a very rewarding experience and students leave with a greater knowledge on how the branches of state government work.

Perhaps the most amazing thing about the NCY program is that it is relatively low in cost for the results obtained. NCY operates on a nominal budget of approximately $10,000 annually. Compared to other youth programs in our state, NCY's programs are very inexpensive.

A short essay such as this one cannot tell of the many rewarding experiences NCY has to offer the youth of our state. If chosen to speak in front of Congress, we could elaborate more on the fine work that NCY is able to do in Nebraska as well as point out case examples of the effect NCY has had on individual lives. It is our sincere hope that we will have the opportunity to do so.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JASON MADSEN, EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT, SANDY, UT

I traveled to a remote village in the Andes mountains of Bolivia with an expedition of twenty other volunteers to construct a hand dug well to provide clean drinking water. My father and I went down to La Paz, Bolivia three days earlier than the rest of the expedition to prepare the site for the other volunteers as part of my Eagle Scout service project. We bought lumber, cement, fiberglass roofing, toilets, and solar shower components. We helped the families build a solar shower and latrine and made it permanent for the villagers since they had no sanitation systems in the village. We also helped dig a well eight meters deep and lined it with concrete rings so it had strength and was protected from contamination.

I wanted to do this because, high in the Bolivian altiplano, in a small village called Villa Anta, a little girl named Hilda Plata drank from the family's common water supply which was nothing more than a runoff pond for surface water, shared by humans and farm animals alike. The polluted water commonly gave the children diarrhea. Little Hilda, only four years old, could not take it and after three days of uncontrolled diarrhea her tiny dehydrated body died in her mothers arms, despite the families efforts to save her. Hilda's death inspired concerned volunteers to do something about the living conditions of the Indians in Bolivia and in other countries. The volunteers, along with the villagers, developed water well technologies and green houses and other ways of obtaining basic necessities that we Americans take for granted.

Since we left, the area has suffered a severe drought. However, the well we built works perfectly. The well has never been dry and the water is clean. And, no more children have died from diseased water and I hope that no more ever do.

I can tell you that it was an experience of a lifetime. I enjoyed laboring with those people. They gave me more in return than I ever gave them. I learned that this world is not so big; that projects like this aren't just dreams. We can make them happen. Together we can make a difference. People helping people. Youth helping Youth.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF EMILY DENSLEY, NIBLEY PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, SALT LAKE CITY, UT

My name is Emily Densley. I live in Salt Lake City, Utah, and attend Nibley Park Elementary School. I like to do things that will help my school. Last year I walked four miles in a walk-a-thon to help raise money for computers for our school. I also collect soup labels for school, so that we can get new school equipment.

I am busy after school as well. I enjoy the piano, play in a soccer league, and perform with a children's singing group. One of my favorite songs that we sing is "What's More American". I like that song because of the many different things that we sing about that is great about America.

I hope for the future of America, that there will be peace in the world, and that all children will have the freedom's that I have. I also hope that a good education will be made available everywhere to all the children who would want that education, and that we will be able to help many people through our education.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF TONY McDONOUGH, PRIDE GARDEN PROJECT, MAGNA, UT

Our Webster Pride Garden has been such a big success that we have had Politicians and Representatives come and plant trees in honor of the garden.

I have been involved in this project for the last 2½ years and I still can't beleive how beautiful it's become. When Betty Panopulos donated the lot for the "Pride Garden", most everyone thought it was impossible, but we've done a whole lot to get to where we are. It has even helped the kids, and teenagers who have been in trouble, because they can help in the garden now. Other people like Cathy Webb, my parents, Dan Tuttle, Betty and Lou Panopulos, John Lobach, Fred and Vicki Wardle, and Tina Montoya have also helped the garden get to where it is right now. Busnesses like Kennecott and Hercules have also donated things like park benches and trees. Students are also learning to share, because we grow fruit and vegetables for the hungry.

We also have our "Magna Clean-up" which comes once a year, and consists of a parade and a clean-up crew (which the Webster students always take part in.) Dan Tuttle, our representative, usually arrives in a tractor of some sort and gives us a big hand. Many people participate in this project, many people also appreciate this project.

I think that it would be a great idea for all towns with a pollution problem even if the town has a low income rate like Magna, to include everyone. even kids, in making their town a better place.

Being part of the Pride Garden, and Clean-up has made me, and lots of other kids feel proud and important.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF BRYCE HALL, CONFLICT MANAGER PROGRAM, HARRISONBURG, VA

I remember once when I was in elementary school, my all time best friend and I got in a fight. It was not a physical fight, but there seemed to be no end to all of the yelling. I remember going to the counselor which I never thought I would ever do. We resolved the problem, but I sure wished there was some other way than going to the counselor.

When I was in fifth grade a brand new program was introduced to our school. It was called the Conflict Manager program, sponsored by the Community Mediation Center of Harrisonburg. This program was set up to help reduce discipline problems in our school by taking the pressure off the teachers, by letting students solve their problems with other students, and by teaching students a valuable skill that they could use all their lives.

The guidance department made a sign up sheet and told the students about the program through an assembly. Many students seemed to be interested in this new idea and signed up to become Conflict Mangers. The next week the students who signed up went to a week-long training session to teach them how to handle conflicts between students. We learned all about the mediation process, how to calm people down and how to get the two disputants to come to an agreement. We were also taught the four rules to a mediation session:

1. - You both must agree to work hard to solve the problem.
2. - Talk only when it is your turn
3. - No name calling or making faces.
4. - Be as truthful as you can.

After the week of training a weekly schedule was set up putting two Conflict Managers on duty for one day at a time. Those two Conflict Managers, male and female, would handle all of the conflicts that occurred on that day, before and after school and between classes. They were also to be on duty at lunch time. The Conflict Mangers on duty were to wear bright blue t-shirts so that the students would know who was on duty that day.

This program has gone on like this for three years, and it has proved to be more and more successful as more and more people came to the Conflict Managers. Conflicts can be referred by the Principal or Teacher and we have noticed that after the program has gone on awhile, the students may refer themselves. Many of the students were happy to come to the Conflict Mangers, and get away from the Teacher or Principal. They are able to solve their dispute, and learn the valuable skill of mediation. Many of the disputants come from a rough neighborhood, and the only way that they know how to resolve a conflict is to fight it out. Coming to the Conflict Manager program teaches the two disputants how to solve their problem on their own, and how to come to an agreement that both parties are happy with. So when either of them get in an argument again, they have the skills, whether they know it or not, to solve their differences.

This cost effective program produces all types of leaders in the School that are elected by the students, such as president, vice president, and secretary of the Conflict Managers. When I made the transition from elementary school to middle school, I was surprised to see that the program works just as well there too. This program can be used at home, work, and can be carried with the students all through their lives. This program also works at the High School level.

"The quality of the work that is being produced has greatly increased and the discipline rate has greatly decreased!" our principal said at an assembly. Remember, "Agitated, Mediate It!"

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHARLES McCRELESS, JR., NEW DOMINION, SPRINGFIELD, VA

When I think back and look at the events that took place in my life over the last three years, I realize how thankful I am to be here at New Dominion. New Dominion is a residential program for kids who cannot cope with their problems, cannot take care of themselves emotionally, and do not have a chance to express themselves openly and feel listened to. Through all of the struggles and problems that I have gone through, I have learned to do these things better, although I still have a lot to learn and always will.

We live in groups of ten. We have our own campsite on a section of land over five hundred acres large. The school is in a rural section of Buckingham County, Virginia. We design and build the tents that we live in and are responsible for the upkeep and maintenance that is required by school standards. We set daily goals of what we want to accomplish, both as a group, and individually. The group goals are voted on weekly in the form of plans which are approved by the staff. The individual goals are set up in the morning and are evaluated at the end of each day. Long term goals are also set up by each individual for their own personal growth. Just about everything that is not a basic need has to be earned through personal growth. The biggest sign of growth and responsibility is the Crest. It is earned by accomplishing long term goals and by showing greatly improved group and self responsibility. When the crest is earned, the privileges of going home, going to school, and being trusted to be alone are attained. This is a major turning point in New Dominion life. From that point, individuals work here and at home towards returning to their previous environment and applying what they have learned.

Feelings are made extremely important in the school. This encouragement allows students to learn to express and deal with their feelings in an appropriate manner. In an ideal situation, feelings are expressed, talked about, and worked through. We learn to accept responsibility for our own problems. Because most people cannot always see, or do not want to admit to the problems they have, the group setting is ideal. The group and the staff help the student to see and admit their problems and begin to change themselves to be more positive people.

I cannot stress the importance of the group setting enough. Nor can I explain the strength of the relationships the students have with each other and staff members and how important their friendships are to each persons growth. Not only do we help ourselves, but we help out each other. We are all in this together, staff and students. Without each other, the things that we accomplish, the problems that we have and work through, the self esteem we establish, and the life and growth that we experience here could not be possible. The program itself is not what I appreciate most. It is the people around me, the love, care and respect they have shown me, and the effort they have been willing to put into me in order for me to accomplish things I never dreamed could be. We are the ones that make this program successful.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF STACEY COLLINS, ENERGIZERS UNLIMITED, SUFFOLK, VA

My name is Stacey Lynette Collins and I am a rising senior at Nansemond River High School in Suffolk, VA. During my high school years, I have had the opportunity to participate in many programs and activities, including selection as a Girls State Representative at Longwood College. During this experience I was made more aware of the essential issues which confront Virginia. As I discussed many current issues with my contemporaries, I realized that one of the programs with which I had been associated addressed many of these issues. At no point have I experienced greater joy than I have while serving as a tutor in the Energizers Unlimited tutorial program. This is a program which I have the honor of representing.

Energizers Unlimited, Inc. was organized three years ago and it is growing stronger. The main purpose of the organization is to raise the level of self-esteem of young people and to help them make their dreams of success become a reality.

This program addresses the needs of elementary and intermediate school age students who are experiencing academic problems as evidenced by low scores on standardized achievement test scores, poor grades in reading and/or mathematics, and poor social adjustments. These problems and more are addressed during tutorial sessions on Mondays and Wednesdays. Although it is necessary at times to continuously go over one particular skill, it does not bother me because by the end of the session, I know the child with whom I have worked has done his or her best.

In addition to the academic assistance provided, many cultural enrichment opportunities are afforded to program participants. These have included a Peanut Butter and Jam Session (an introduction to classical music for young children) and a trip to Disneyworld during the summer of 1989. Without Energizers unlimited, some of these children would never have an opportunity to experience some of these things.

This program offers me an opportunity to give back to the community part of what I have received and learned. I am truly grateful for this opportunity to be of service to my community.

The Energizers Unlimited, Inc. tutorial program is making a difference in the lives of many young people in Suffolk because of a strong leader, willing tutors and interested students. All these things and more combine to make the Energizers Unlimited, Inc. tutorial program the essence of success. I would welcome an opportunity to share with others, as a 1990 Children's Day Ambassador, the experiences I have had since becoming affiliated with Energizers Unlimited, Inc.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROSHELLE AMUNDSON, POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT, SAYMOR, WI

Of all of today's problems, the ones that raise the most concern are the ones that face our teenagers.

Many of these problems start in the home. Throughout generations, what was is no longer. There no longer exists the idea that family is the center of life. Now, teens refer to home as a place to sleep, get free food, and hang their hats. The American family has taken a sincere downfall throughout the last few decades. This has taken a severe toll on today's teens. They find a safe place to run is towards drugs and alcohol. Teens face numerous, stressful problems including family, school, friends, relationships, peer pressure, and most teens are terrified of what the future holds. They learn that alcohol and drugs provide them with an escape from their harsh realities. They have to realize their are other solutions. The Positive Youth Development (P.Y.D.) and peer lestening programs provide support to teens. P.Y.D. gives teens a feeling of hope and confidence, and it can change an attitude from completely negative to extremely positive. P.Y.D. gives an opportunity for self-growth. All it takes is a creative mind determined to find a healthy, positive solution other than using drugs and alcohol.

Some of our activities have included open-gym, and lock-ins. P.Y.D. gives youths another solution in a healthy atmosphere. You dont have to use to have fun.

The peer listening programs are marvelous. There are two day trainings with professionals. They are filled with laughter, tears, and fun, and in two days there is an incredible self-growth noticeable.

You then are ready to run groups, that include one other "peer listener," and about ten Junior High students. Peer listening is wonderful for many reasons. First, the younger students look up to us older studenta and we are a definate role model for them. They feel a sense of security just by having an open ear and they know someone cares for them. We older peers can share our experiences, and provide a model for them. The peer listening program is wonderful and very educational to all parties involved.

These programs provide support, a positive atmosphere and a sense of security and trust. However, I believe more education on drugs and alcohol is needed. We also need to find a way to fill the gap in the relationship with our families. That's where many problems begin. Family is the center of our lives. Today's problems as I can see it, is the lack of communication.

Our future could be very bright and successful, but parents, teens, teachers, and adults need to work together, communicate feelings, ideas and then, together we can destroy our drug and alcohol problem.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF JAN BLETTNER, YOUTH ALLIANCE, MIDDLETON, WI

In the first place, I would like to thank those responsible for giving me the opportunity to express my ideas concerning the Youth Alliance for a Drug Free Wisconsin. Our Youth Alliance is a network of young people from across the state that seeks to enhance self esteem by reinforcing choices to be substance free. In addition, we encourage others to follow our lead and join us in the drug and alcohol free decision.

Last May, the Youth Alliance assembled at the capitol and then at the Governor's Mansion to discuss pressing issues regarding our choice's to lead alcohol and drug free lifestyles. We conversed in small groups about topics such as: What factors contributed to our making the decision to be substance free? How do we encourage others to be substance free? How can we help adults learn from our thoughts and experiences?

The Youth Alliance conference proved to be a tremendous success. I feel the conference gave us the unique opportunity to communicate our thoughts and feelings on a threating issue as well as giving the coordinators and other adults the special opportunity of gaining our insight and information on this ever-changing problem. It was a wonderful feeling to be able to talk to other young adults, much like myself, and to speak with parents and other adults that were especially eager to listen. I can truly say that I think substance-free kids are some of the most interesting, and intriguing people I have ever met. I am encouraged to know that the Youth Alliance Conference will continue with increasing frequency in the years to come.

An important contributor to the ongoing success of the Youth Alliance is the many Local Alliances for a Drug Free Wisconsin chapters that are located in communities all over the state. The mission of each chapter is to make their respective communities aware that they can help stop the spread of drug and alcohol abuse and to turn that awareness into action. The Alliance in our small town of Middleton has provided the parent support system necessary to continue youth involvement on a local level.

With the culmination of these programs on the local, state and federal level, I believe Wisconsin has taken a large step in the prevention of drug and alcohol use and abuse. This is in large part due to the government leaders that have helped facilitate these extremely effective programs.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SIMONE TUCKER, LEARNING ENTERPRISE OF WISCONSIN, INC., MILWAUKEE, WI

My name is Simone Tucker, I am from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I am attending LEARNING ENTERPRISE OF WISCONSIN, INC.. I am 19 years of age. I was 17 years old when I got pregnant with my first child. It wasn't a planned pregnancy, but also I wasn't using any form of birth control. My family was disappointed, I had lost all contact from my brothers for about 5 or 6 months. I am the baby out of 7 children and that's why my brothers wanted me to stay the "baby". On April 6, 1988, (my birthday too), I had a little boy named Duran. When Duran was 4 months, I became pregnant again. I had stopped going to school when Duran was 9 months. Then, on April 26, 1989, I had another little boy named DeJon. Now, here I am, 18 years old, with two children, not attending school, no job and my kids' father wasn't around any more. I began thinking, "I can't be like this all my life." I said to myself, "I'm going to go back to school and get me a good education and make something out of my life." I want to be able to get my children what they ask for sometimes and get them what they need".

At the present time, Duran is 2 and DeJon is 1. I received a letter from my WEOP (Wisconsin Employment Opportunity Program) specialist giving me an appointment to come in and sign up for school. My WEOP worker told me that Learnfare will send me to school, pay for daycare for my children, and pay for transportation for me to go to school. If it hadn't been for Learnfare, I would be lost. I'm going to school full time and I am enjoying all of my subjects. I am learning, my goal is to attend college and study Computer Science. Learnfare saved the future for me and my children. Guess what? I can and I am going to do it!

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CANDACE KUMALAA, KAUAI, HI

My name is Candace Kumalaa and I am sixteen years old. Although I've lived in Hawaii most of my life, I did return to the mainland with my mother for several years until four years ago. Since then I have lived on the Waianae Coast of the island of Oahu. Due to being victumized in my own home, the trauma of divorced parents with their own multiple problems, turmoil in my extended family, relocation to Hawaii during my early adolescence and the suicide of my close and dear brother several years ago, I reacted impulsively, running away, truanting school, and engaging in beyond control behavior.

I was placed at Hale Opio on the island of Kauai, the northernmost of the major islands, in March of 1990. The thinking of separating me from unfavorable peer influences has been helpful in my success in the program so far. The program is very academic, another part that has greatly suited my needs. Hale Opio provides a very structured day, beginning at 6AM with wake-up/clean-up, breakfast and leaving for the local high school by 7:10AM. We are driven to school by our counselors who are like our parents - they teach us skills we need to make the choices best suited to our situations - and they love and support us while we practice these skills. At school the School Liason greets us and checks to see we are in our classes throughout the day. If we need help talking with a teacher, getting scheduled for a test for proper class assignment, getting a tutor, getting make-up work, working out a difference with a class-mate, she's there as our advocate. After school we go to Kauai Community College four days a week, the fifth day is set aside for group or individual therapy with outside therapists. At KCC we are each enrolled in a computer-based competencies program to teach us to read, do grade level math, study for our GED or SAT, or hook into PLATO for other learning experiences. Because we have had problems in our families for many years, and have taken these problems to school, we are very far behind in our basic skills. Since Hale Opio insists we go to school, they support us by teaching us the skills we need in order to get back into the classwork without feeling further embarassed and inadequate. We are also involved in a job-skills program at KCC which helps us discover our natural interests and abilities and link up with jobs using those interests. All of these activities help us view ourselves a little differently and help us make the tough choices we have to make regarding our lifestyle. These choices are talked about frequently with our "special" counselors in individual sessions and in nightly group sessions so we really can make the changes necessary to live a life that helps ourselves, our families and our community.

Hale Opio supports us not only in school and job placement, but allows for all sorts of experiences relating to the arts through their ceramics studio and dark room, connects us to the community through other agencies' work with youth, provides for meaningful exchanges with youth not in like circumstances, to provide for us a different view of the world than we have had. It is this new vision and the practice in life skills, under the truly caring and loving counselors that gives us the courage to make a better future for ourselves.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ARLO ASEVEDO, BOYS' SCHOOL, WORLAND, WY

I have been nominated to represent the State of Wyoming at the National Childrens' Day program in Washington D.C., beginning October 1, 1990, and ending October 5, 1990.

I am a sixteen year old student that presently resides at the Wyoming Boys' School. This School is the States' most restrictive juvenile facility. I have experienced a lengthy involvement within the juvenile justice system, spending almost my entire adolescence in the custody of treatment institutions, federal training programs, youth homes and jail. My problems have mostly occurred due to my disrespect for rules, authority figures, and the property of others. I also have a history of drug and alcohol abuse. The numerous institutions that I've been involved with have offered me various alternatives to my behavior and attitude. However, I have not succeeded until only recently.

There are many different reasons why I believe that the treatment programs at this facility are successful. Group discussions and activities are used to bring the students and staff closer together so that positive relationships can be formed. This helps everyone communicate in a more open and honest way so that we can discuss our problems and future goals.

The Boys' School is made up of three (3) different Living Units (or Cottages) that normally have twenty (20) to twenty-five (25) students. Each unit has their own kitchen, recreation room, and conference rooms. Each student has a room to themselves, which allows for privacy if needed. Overall, the physical make-up allows for a comfortable and structured atmosphere.

On the weekdays, all students either attend academic classes or are involved in a vocational training program. Our education department offers the same classes as the public schools offer, grades 6 through 12. Students can achieve their High School Diploma or the GED certificate, or they can continue their studies at the grade level they were in prior to being placed at the Boys' School. The Academic program is successful because students are working on Individual Education Plans (IEP) and this allows them to get more individual assistance if they need it. The Vocational program offered include Welding, Carpentry, Auto Shop, Lawn Maintenance, Horticulture, Cooking and Plumbing. These programs give students the opportunity to gain training for future employment.

The most important part of our program is the Individual and Group counseling process. The Treatment Team learns about each student by gathering social history information and designing an Individual Treatment Plan (ITP). The ITP specifies Goal areas that each student needs to improve in, i.e., decision-making, family dynamics, self-esteem, responsibility, substance abuse, etc. Large and Small group counseling sessions are held at least once a day, and they primarily focus on the development of living skills, self-esteem building, and short/long-term goal setting. Individual counseling is used whenever students or staff desire. The special part of our program is that the staff will do anything they can to help the students become more positive and productive individuals, because there is an open line of communication.

Staff members at the Boys' School motivate and challenge students to achieve goals that were once looked at by students as being impossible, and this helps the students prepare for a better life. There is a commitment of the staff to offer the best recourse possible, and this is what makes the program successful.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF RAIN GILMAN, YOUTH ALTERNATIVES, CHEYENNE, WY

My name is Rain Gilman, and I live in Cheyenne, Wyoming. I come from a middle class family. My parents have been married for twenty years. I have a younger brother that is fourteen and a younger sister that is ten. We live in a good neighborhood and go to good schools.

Two years ago, I had very low self-esteem. It was hard for me to try to live up to what I thought my parents' expectations of me were. School pressure was on, and so was peer pressure. It is a lot harder for kids these days to be the so-called perfect student and child.

I believed that I had no friends and had to do things to prove my friendship to them. The group I was hanging around with was not a good crowd anyway. I then started drinking and doing drugs to fit in with my "friends." While I was drunk, I would sleep with these guys and not always remember. I finally started to sneak out to meet with these people, so I would also ditch school. My schoolwork suffered terribly, and I did not even care.

My family was being torn apart. My parents could not handle me at all. I would not come home when they expected, and I definitely did not act like they expected. One day my school counselor called my mom because I had ditched school. She recommended Youth Alternatives to us. I switched schools and made an appointment to see a youth counselor.

When we got to the office, it was really nice, very homey and comfortable. Before we started our sessions, my family could not communicate. My dad only got mad and yelled; my mom was confused; and I just would not talk. Rita, my counselor, taught us how to get mad, but not yell, and how to let everyone have their chance to talk.

I was able to tell Rita anything. I could trust her. The confidentiality we had was great. We then moved on to sessions where there was one-on-one contact. My parents also went in and talked with Rita about how things were going. It has made our whole family grow from hate and confusion to love and udnerstanding.

Rita has done so much for me; she made me feel as though I were just as good as everyone else. Rita made me recognize who I am and why I was there. Without her, I would not have the confidence I have today. She had me write down the good things I did every day. This made me realize what I really can do. Rita has been there for me whenever I called. If my family, or even just I, needed to see her, she would always be right there for us. Now that my life is put back together and feels full again, Rita and I have not lost our relationship. I still call her every once in awhile and talk. It is not about the bad stuff I had done; it is about the good stuff I am doing.

Youth Alternatives is a great program and should be commended for the care and consideration that goes into every one of their families and family members. Now that I have won Student of the Year, am on the Honor Roll, and President of my FBLA Club, I can say that without Youth Alternatives, I would not be where I am today, and I thank them for that. Youth Alternatives has been there for me for two years and always will be. I know that, and so does my family. Thank you once again!

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HOPE TYLER, ATTENTION HOME, CHEYENNE, WY

The Attention home is a place where kids who have been beaten, or need a timeout from their family, or their foster families can go for thirty days or less.

The Attention home is a place to go and calm yourself and work on problems.

While a kid stays there he should be learning responsibility and respect for themselves as well as others.

A lot of people mistake the Attention home for a detention home.

Kids that are placed in the Attention home have chores that have to be done, and he/she will be punished for a wrong doing, but they still have walks, allowance, and fun activities.

When I was in the Attention home, the staff helped me to know I had a drug problem, as well as family problems too.

From the Attention home some kid go home, some go to foster homes, and some go to the Hirst Home, as I did. I have been in the Hirst for ten months now, and in this time the staff has helped me through a drug rehabilitation program and two relapses. They have also helped me realize that my home is not a healthy place to be at this time.

The majority of the kids that are here go home.

While a kid is here at the Hirst they can work their way up the levels toward more and more responsibility.

On the higher levels, you get more privileges such as more allowance, and time out of the house on your own.
I am very grateful for these two homes because they have helped me with my problems and kept me in the community.

What's made the difference with me? People have shown me that they care and therefore I care.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF GENESSE BRUNER, GIRLS SCHOOL, CASPER, WY

My name is Genesse Bruner. I am 17 years old and live in Casper, Wyoming. I am writing regarding my placement in the Wyoming Girls School and New Directions Alcohol and Drug Treatment Center.

I am first going to say a little bit about the Girls School and what most often happens there. It is located in Sheridan, Wyoming, out in the country. Upon arrival, each girl is placed in one of four dormitories depending on the age, maturity, or where the staff thinks the individual will best fit. Around the campus is a pond which we swim in and horse corrals. The girls can ride horses if they are behaving and working out issues. We have a school building that everyone goes to for six periods a day. In each dormitory there are usually one to two groups of girls that consist of approximately 10 to 15 girls. In each group the girls are expected to hold each other accountable for their actions and work together as a family would. All the girls are equal and no one girl has any more power than anyone else. All girls are expected to do daily details such as laundry, kitchen work, or details around the dorm.

We would usually have group once a day with our assigned group and a counselor. In group therapy we take turns asking for group time to discuss any issue or problem that we feel needs to be talked about. When a girl first arrives she is given an autobiography guide to write out and bring back to group when she is finished. Such things that are included are the history of the individual's child life and things they have done, or things that have happened to them. The main topics are usually: family, drug and alcohol abuse, sexuality, criminal behavior, authority and friends. After the girl has given her autobiography, she then brings these topics to group one at a time and the group and counselor together share and try to relate to their situation, or try to figure out new ways to handle the issue, or talk about ways to accept things we cannot change.

I think the only way to really explain the program is to share a little of my experience there. When I first got to Sheridan, I was a real brat. I tried to ask my parents to send me money after I had forged their checks. The staff read the mail to know what is going on. They brought my letters to group and we talked about it, and I, of course, tried to put the blame on my parents. The group and counselor helped me realize that no matter what went on at home, it did not give me the right to forge checks or to break the law. They helped me take a look at what I was doing without permitting the behavior to continue (enabling) or feeling sorry for me. They held me accountable for my actions and at the same time helped me work through painful issues, such as incest. I worked mostly on that issue and got the most benefits out of it there. There were many girls in the same boat that could relate and give me hope and courage to quit being a victim. At the Girls School it was a safe environment where I could talk about anything or try to confront family members and be able to have support and encouragment while I was confronting them. In group we were expected to "ACHE". This stands for being Assertive, Contributing to group, being Honest and Encouraging one another. When we ask to go on a visit or leave to go home for good, the group and the staff evaluate whether or not we are "ACHEing". When a girl wants to leave or go on a visit, they come to group and ask permission to go. The group evaluates

if the individual has been working on issues that were causing them to be a threat to the public or themselves. The group votes considering whether they think the girl has a concrete plan to go out and try to prove she can do things differently. If the group thinks the girl will just use her visit to party or get into trouble, they will vote no. If they think the girl deserves it and is going to try, and they have seen the g' l working in school and behaving well around the dorm, they usually say yes. Then the staff go to a staff meeting to see if it's the best for the girl's interest. When a group is not working together as a group and is enabling each other to stay sick, then the staff will intervene and give a consequence to help the group work together as a whole.

I think the reasons why the Girls School is successful for me and other girls is, for one, there is no set time or date that you get out, and you usually stay until you have decided to work on your own issues, without them forcing you to. They are not willing to let you give up even if you want to. I thought the staff really cared about the girls and worked together as a team. I think another good thing about the Girls School is that they work as a group instead of individuals. Also, the counselor does not do all the talking, and the group learns to work as a family. The Girls School has groups such as Sexual Abuse groups, Eating Disorders groups or other groups to help girls that have those problems and do not feel comfortable talking to the whole group. There is also an Assertiveness group that I went to that did role playing to help us stand up to our old friends.

From the Girls School, they sent me to New Directions in Casper, Wyoming, to get into intense treatment for my alcohol and drug abuse. At New Directions, we had a lot of groups and went to a lot of AA/NA meetings. We worked on finding a higher power and turning our will over to that power. I worked on my self-esteem and used the "fake-it-till-you-make-it" method with trying to like myself. I still have my low days, but I handle them differently. We talked a lot about the consequences of using drugs/alcohol so that we would realize that it's not the right way. Now I am out of treatment and into a new real nice foster home that the Girls School helped me get into so that I would not be back into the same environment. I have lots of aftercare set up for me to help me stay clean and graduate from high school and do things that I want to do. Both treatment programs helped me and encouraged me enough to stay clean, try out for volleyball and not have to always feel like a victim. I have goals now to graduate, which I didn't care to before, and I'm getting better at doing things for myself instead of others.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RONALD PUCKETT, YOUTH FOR YOUTH PROGRAM, HONOLULU, HI

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My name is Ronald Puckett and I am one of four Youth Ambassadors from Hawaii. I am here to talk about a group called Youth for Youth that I have been involved with through a social service agency named Adult Friends for Youth.

In the Spring semester of 1989, I was a student in the Special Motivation Program (SMP) at Farrington High School. I had a poor opinion of my intellectual capacities and was, therefore, an unmotivated student. Two professional staff members from Adult Friends for Youth intervened and helped us form a group to build our self-esteem. In a short time the co-leaders helped us recognize our potentialities, and noticed marked improvement in the members. We had clearly developed self-confidence which led to better school attendance, improved grades, and no need to look for an escape through drugs.

In Fall 1989, as an outcome of our change in attitude and performance, we were all mainstreamed into regular classes. This meant our group could no longer meet during SMP time. Therefore, as a way to continue our dynamic group meetings, we decided to meet once a week over our lunch hour. It was at this time that I suggested that since we had received so much from group counseling, that we could start giving something back to the community by using what we had learned. We decided to call ourselves "Youth for Youth" and began reaching out as peer counselors to other students who had the potential for "going down the wrong path."

As peer counselors we share the personal experiences and problems that we have dealt with, and encourage other students to do likewise. Many of the students we've talked to attend schools that are feeder schools to Farrington High School. By helping to stimulate students' thinking about their own problems and the consequences of their behaviors, and by encouraging them to stay in school and think about their future we hope to prevent many of the problems that we've experienced, and that we've observed among other high school students.

Youth for Youth members have also been panelists on the topic of "Effective Parenting" at the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Conference held at the East West Center on March 23, 1990. The audience of Social Workers

was very impressed with our candid presentation, and afterwards two Social Workers from the Island of Maui asked us if we could come to their Youth Shelter and meet with some of their residents, and possibly with some parents.

In response to their request we traveled to Maui and spoke with two groups which included both students and fosterparents. The feedback we received was extremely positive.

Youth for Youth has taught me a lot about myself and others, and has made an enormous difference in my life. I feel more confident in my personal life, in school, and at my workplace. I feel I am important and I have something to contribute to others. I believe that the students we've reached out to in the schools have benefited from the concerns that Youth for Youth has shown for them, just as we benefited from the care and concern that our group leaders from Adult Friends for Youth showed for us. I have seen what works and strongly encourage funding for professionally staffed self-esteem groups in schools and for peer counseling as well.

Thank you.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SHANE VALENTINE, POST FALLS, ID

My parents are divorced. My brother and I live with my mother. We have been abused for quite a few years. We have been involved in a number of different programs both public and private for numerous problems involving physical, mental, and sexual abuse. These programs have helped to hold our family unit together.

We were involved with a private counselor, Tom Hearn, of Interfaith Family Counseling. Here we work individually with feeling of anger, dealing with sexual abuse from our dad. Learning to become a non-victim and deal with the anger. His office kept in touch with Social Services after I went to the hospital.

I soon became out of control. I buried my problems for a long period of time. The anger I was hiding finally exploded into violence towards my family and myself. The anger was the result of abuse, physical, mental and sexual from our father. We were all in danger physically as we were attacked and injured.

I was admitted into the Sacred Heart Adolescent Psychiatric Unit. I was in the hospital for about a month. My Dr. and the staff felt I should not come home, but should go into a long-term care facility, such as a boys ranch.

A representative for Social Services of Idaho attended a team meeting. I was not sent to a long-term facility. Instead, I was returned home, we needed to find alternatives.

Before I was released, we worked out a plan that would help us. We were scared and uncomfortable of my coming home.

At the Depart. of Social Services, Family and Child Services, our counselors, have helped us through the transition from the hospital to home.

They work with us on learning to cope, dealing with our problems as a family. We are trying to reorganize our structure as a family. Its not just one person with a problem but all of ours. As a family we all must work on a solution together. When I first came in touch with our counselor, I saw a bleak future, we were scared. We thought we were losing our family.

All of these programs are helping. I feel if we didn't have thee programs, we would not be as far as we are today.

The counseling has helped us to tough it out, resolve problems. To look at ourselves, I'm glad we became involved or I would not be home. We have to work on each day as it comes.

I went directly from the hospital into Day Treatment, an addition of the Anchor House program. Day Treatment has had a positive affect on me. I have a higher self-esteem, work on solutions to problems, coping skills and educationally, they keep our skills sharp.

Day Treatment helps me socially, teaching us to cope and to become an individual who will work in the community. In Day Treatment, there is a group called PPC (Positive Peer Culture). A group of kids not adults get together and share our problems. We then vote on whose problem needs the most help immediately. Then we give them advice. All information is confidential. We also can tell someone to "check" their problem when they are not in group. If they don't check their behavior, they can call a helping session to help them with their problem.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JENNIFER ALLEN, LINK PROGRAM, CALDWELL, ID

LINK is a three year multi-site rural demonstration project designed to significantly impact the problems associated with teenage pregnancy. The project provides coordination of care through social work and career/education case management. The objectives of the project are to decrease the low birthweight rate among teenage mothers, increase the rate of school continuation or employment of young parents and decrease the occurrence of repeat pregnancies to teens. The project is being statistically evaluated and the results will be compared to local and national comparison groups. Case managers are located in community based public health clinics, where each case manager serves as an advocate and individual counselor for pregnant and parenting teens and their families. The case manager is responsible for assisting his/her clients through a system of fragmented state and local services.

THEY BELIEVED IN ME....
by *Jennifer Allen, Teen Parent*

Many people don't appreciate the programs that our state has to offer young people that are in need of a little care. This is when the Link Program took over, when I needed a little bit of that care.

As a teenage mother, I face a long hard road ahead of me. As a client of Link, I don't think I have to worry. The program keeps my spirit alive and gives me the chance to talk with someone who understands my feelings. They don't make me feel as if I'm a terrible person for what I've done. They're understanding and make me feel comfortable when I'm around them.

I feel that this program has aided me in the job that I now hold, thanks to the encouragement and great help that they have given me. The Link Program gives you the chance to go on with your life and continue school. Paying for my day care helps so that I am able to fulfill my education and keep my job. I know that I will be able to walk down the gym floor and get that diploma thanks to the program that gives me the strength to go for it.

To me the heart of this program lies in the counselors themselves. They are the ones that give the guidance and help us through the hard times we face in these days of teenage motherhood. Each one of them has a special place in their heart for us. That's what makes it so special... that they all care what happens to each and every one of us.

I feel that this program has helped me in more ways than one. Thanks to the case managers' hard work and understanding I will be able to continue my education. To me that's the most important thing in order to take proper care of my baby. With the Link Program's help and guidance I feel that will happen. I also know that I'm not a failure because I have a baby. I was just another person that needed a little bit of care and a lot of love and that's what they gave me. I know I will be a success and all because they believed in me.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SAMANTHA ALICIA STARKS, BOARD OF ACCOUNTABILITY, PAYETTE, ID

The things that I learned from the Board of Accountability are that I am responsible for my own actions and should always think things out before I do them.

On the contract they had me bring my report card in every meeting so they could check on my progress in school. They had me do community service. I worked with elderly people at a nursing home.

I think the accountability board helped me change the way I looked at life and it helped me see that I wasn't where I wanted to be in life. It made me think about my grades. Eventually my family life became better.

My goal in life is to be successful and go to college and become rich. I want to be a model or a Pediatrition.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JORGE OCHOA, MIGRANT SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAM, IDAHO FALLS, ID

My name is Jorge Ochoa. I am 14 years old and will be in the 9th grade. Right now I am attending Migrant Summer School. I would like to tell you a little bit about the people that have helped me besides my teachers in regular school.

Migrant Summer School is a place where a couple of Project Hope Volunteers from EG & G and the school district have helped me in many ways. For example, the volunteers helped me to learn additional things about mathematics, reading, and science. Thanks to the volunteers and Migrant Summer School I have been able to bridge the gap between 3rd thru 9th grade. While I have been attending summer school some other Project Hope volunteers came to school and spoke to all the students. This year we had a total of 247 students in our summer school. The Project Hope volunteers explained to all of us the importance of staying in school and going on to universities. They let the students know they were there to help them after school with their homework.

Rosa Rodriguez, a Project Hope volunteer and coordinator for the Migrant Program in the school districts of Idaho Falls has helped me alot. She is a very caring and important person. She is always there when I need someone to listen to me. She is responsible for over 400 students. She goes to the homes and helps out with different things. She has a good relationship with the students. When I came here from California she was the one that helped me enroll in school and told me about Project HOPE. She helped me turn in my application for the U.S. Space Camp because she believes that I am good enough to apply. She is always encouraging me to better myself. I was lucky enough to be selected as an alternate to Space Camp.

The people of our community have also helped me because without the people of Idaho Falls there would be no summer school or any school for that matter. The people of our community are the ones who have to pay for the schools to be built and run properly. Without community support, I and many other young people like myself, could very well be lost in our rapidly changing times. Project Hope is an organization that is helping me and many students in Idaho Falls. I believe that Project HOPE will continue to help students in Idaho Falls for the years to come as long as the two main ingredients to the project are never taken out. These ingredients are EG & G volunteers and school people who both care about students. As long as there are people who care, there will always be those who will appreciate that care. Thanks PROJECT HOPE!!

(Project HOPE - Hispanics Offering Pupils Encouragement - a joint industry/school partnership between EG & G - Idaho, Inc. and Idaho Falls School District #91 & #93)

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SCOTT M. GRUBER, ST. JOHN'S MILITARY SCHOOL, SALINA, KS

I guess that you could say that I have had my share of trouble and turmoil in the first 16 years of my life. My mother died when I was four, my brother and I were abused by our father (whom I have not seen in years), I was adjudicated as a child in Need of Care by the State of Kansas and I have been placed in thirteen different foster homes or group settings. I do not mention all of this to be a complainer or to gain your sympathy, but because I think it is important that you understand my background and how far I have come to this point in my life.

I am presently a junior attending St. John's Military School in Salina, Kansas. I was placed at St. John's through Social Rehabilitative Services for the State of Kansas. This will be my second year of attendance there. I have earned the rank of Cadet Staff Sargeant. Last year I participated in football, basketball and track. I also qualified as a Blue Beret (one of the top three academic students) with a 92.30 overall grade point average and as a Spartan through my JROTC class.

St. John's is not just a school to me. It has become my home. Some of the other students don't like the structure and discipline but I think that they are being very short-sighted. There are three sides to St. John's that have helped me immensely; the religion program, the military program and the academic program.

St. John's is an Episcopal-related Church school but boys of all faiths and denominations can attend. We attend chapel service twice a week, on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings. Our spiritual development is not left up to chance as it is in most schools.

In its military orientation, St. John's teaches courtesy, promptness, orderliness, self discipline, leadership and responsibility. These are all traits that I want to learn whether or not I go into the military as a career.

The academic program at St. John's is unique in that the teachers really care and work with you until you understand the subject matter. Most of my classes have fewer than twelve students per class, so I get a lot of individual instruction. If I am able to go on to college through some sort of a scholarship, I think that I will be very well prepared academically.

I am grateful for the opportunity to try and make something of myself. Some of the problems I have experienced to this point I have brought on myself, others I have not. What is important is that I go forward and make the most of whatever potential God has given me.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SEAN WISSMAN, STUDENTS TO UNDO THE DRUG STATUS, MANHATTAN, KS

Out of all the problems which plague the youth of today, perhaps the most flagrant and formidable is the problem of drug and alcohol abuse. It pervades our cities, our suburbs and our small communities. It is evident in all social and monetary echelons and no matter how much money or attention is given to it, it continues to grow at an enormous rate

Subsequently, novel programs aimed at stopping or even curbing the problem's seemingly omnipresent existence are a valuable commodity today. I feel that one such program, the Kansas Governor's Center for Teen Leadership, is especially valuable in the war against drug and alcohol abuse.

The program was contrived by Kansas Governor Mike Hayden. It consists of the selection of anywhere from 1-10 student representatives from each high school in the state. Student selection is based on a student's leadership qualities and character. Once selected, the students participate in a four day "training camp" in which they attend lectures and meet with their individual school "teams" to discuss how they can attack the problem on the school front.

Looking back, the camp was educational and fun. I met a lot of new people, learned a lot about the problem and learned a lot about being a leader.

But while the actual camp was enjoyable, the seeds that the camp planted had a much more profound effect upon myself, my team and our community. For during our "team time", the delegation from my school had the opportunity to set up a completely novel program to head off the drug and alcohol problem in our community.

As leaders in our school, we had noticed that many members of our student body were perceiving non-use of drugs and alcohol to be "wimpy" and conservative. We also noticed that a lot of students with low self esteem were being lost to the problem in their search for status and self fulfillment. As a result, we formulated a program we call S.T.U.D.S., an acronym for Students To Undo the Drug Status.

The program's aim is to accentuate the positives of saying "no" to drugs and alcohol. It features a schoolwide speaking program, a parent-student forum about the problem at the high school and the transformation of our small, eight student organization into a school club, open to all students at the high school.

Overall, my team and I feel that the momentum is changing when it comes to alcohol and drug abuse in our school. Furthermore, we feel that the Governor's Center for Teen Leadership is a big part of it. For the program is based on a very important principle which is often forgotten in the high priced governmental war against alcohol and drug abuse. To win, you've got to attack the problem at it's roots. Instead of investing in high priced advertisements or slogans which seem impersonal and out of touch to the average student, Governor Hayden and the organizers of GCTL decided to use the leaders of the problem's "homefront", the school, as carriers of their anti-drug message. This reversion to positive peer pressure is the absolute key to the success of the program. I, for one, know my community will be better for it.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CRYSTAL E. STEPHENS, INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM, LEXINGTON, KY

I would like to begin by introducing myself, I am Crystal Elise Stephens. I am sixteen years old and will be in the eleventh grade at the Lexington Christian Academy. I feel very honored to be able to express my feelings about my life in foster care. The three issues I would like to address are my life in Foster Care, programs, and ideas for the future of foster children.

I have been in Foster Care for ten years and I have been grateful many times. I was placed in foster care when I turned six years old. I was placed in care because of neglect. I lived with my grandfather until this time. I was very happy and content as a child. When I was removed from my home, it had a great deal of effect on me. I was really hurt at first, but I became more confused and hurt as time passed. I thought that nobody wanted me and that I wasn't worth very much. I learned that foster care wasn't so bad and that I was a person just like everyone else. I finally decided that I had a life to live, so why not make it a good one. God blessed me with many wonderful homes and now he has blessed me with something greater, an adoptive home. Foster Care has opened many doors for me in many directions. I have been successful in many of the challenges I have had. Programs that are offered in the Foster Care sytem are very educational and very useful.

I have gone through many programs associated with the Cabinet for Human Resources. In these programs, I was taught values to help me when I am out on my own in a couple of years. I went through the Independent Living Program and I completed it successfully. I was taught many things that are necessary to make it when I am out on my own. I feel that learning how to grocery shop, to apartment and house hunt, and to compare costs is very important. The job skills I have learned that are helping me now are cooking, job interviewing skills, and menu planning skills. Knowing how to plan out a meal and cook it is a great help now. By knowing how to do these things, I feel better better prepared for the future. It is very important to know about job interviewing. If you have the skills in an interview, then you will have a much better chance of getting the job for which you are applying. Some skills I have learned for the future are balancing a checkbook, so that when I have a bank account I will already know how to balance my account. I also learned that knowing how to fill out a tax return form is helpful. It can also help you save money. Instead of paying someone else to do it, you can save the money by doing it yourself. The things I have learned in the Independent Living Program will stay with me forever. Many teenagers don't have the opportunity to attend the classes. Without the help from Foster Care, I wouldn't have gotten to take these classes.

I would like to see foster children participate in more activities that would bring them closer together. I feel this way because it helps to have someone to talk to who has been through some of the experiences I have had. It helps also to know the whole world isn't against you and you have someone to count on when you need it.

Making a day for children and youth is a wonderful thing to do. I've longed to voice my opinion but I haven't had the opportunity. Foster children are sometimes looked upon differently than other children. When I am questioned about Foster Care and why I'm not with my "real" parents, I sometimes feel that I am less of a person. I feel that a lot of kids in my place may have the same sort of feelings. When I get older and I am on my own, I will never forget the children who are less fortunate than I am. I feel that foster children go unnoticed and they are often forgotten. I hope that someday all children will feel special, wanted and cared for in some way. That is a wonderful feeling that all humans need, most of all children.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DEANNA M. BRASHER, COMMUNITY BASED WORK TRAINING PROGRAM, HAWESVILLE, KY

The Community Based Work Training Program is a fairly new program in the Kentucky education system. High school students in Trainable Mentally Handicapped (TMH) or Educable Mentally Handicapped (EMH) or other handicapped classes are trained and evaluated in competitive community based paid and non-paid employment. The program is designed to improve the transition from school to the work place. The following is to be submitted as written testament of one exceptional student in this program, Deanne M. Brasher.

As of last year, there have been many changes in my life. I came to Apollo High School feeling like I didn't belong and I was not happy with my life. I had no future plans until I became involved with the Community Training Program. My parents, teachers and the Job Coach, Mr. Roberts, gave me encouragement to continue with each job even at times I wanted to give up and when I didn't think I could do the job. I am now working to complete my high school diploma. I worked at the YMCA Day Care this summer earning my own money. I hope to have that same job after I've finished high school. I love working with children and believe I make them happy when I see their smiling faces and when we play and work together. I am continuing my preschool training at Peace Lutheran Preschool during the school year and enjoy it very much. I have learned how to work with other adults and get along with them. The job training program has given me the confidence to believe that I can do anything I want to do. It can help other students with their future if they will work hard and listen to the job coach. I couldn't have gotten a job this summer without the program. I feel great about myself and I'm doing something I've always wanted to do.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KRISTI KIM McCONNELL, COMMUNITY BASED EDUCATION, NICHOLASVILLE, KY

My name is Kristi McConnell. I am a senior at Jessamine County High School. At JCHS I learn how to do things that will help me in my life.

At my school, they help me get jobs to see what I want to do when I am out of school. I have worked at a beauty school, a church and a nursing home. Now I have a job at McDonald's. I love my job. I make $3.90 an hour and work hard. I put my money in a bank. My teacher is helping me learn how to do banking by myself. I have a Christmas club and a checking account. I have learned how to write checks by myself.

At school I work hard counting money and making change. Then I go to the grocery store and buy things. I know how to shop for good food and not spend a lot of money. Then I count my change to be sure it's right.

I learn words at school that will help me in my life like CAUTION, FATAL IF SWALLOWED, FLAMMABLE and many more. I learn what those words mean, too.

I learn how to walk places in Nicholasville. I know how to look for cars and cross streets. I also know what to do if a stranger talks to me and wants me to go for a ride. I say "No" and walk away quickly.

At school, we practice talking on the phone and then we try on real phones.

I can order pizza, call to see the doctor, call for a haircut and call if I am lost.

I also have a library card. I go and look at magazines, check out a videotape and look at books.

In school, I learn how to apply first aid if I am hurt. I know how to clean up broken glass.

I learn how to cook so when I live on my own I will know how. I can use an iron, an oven and a stove. I know how to make a microwave cake, a spanish omelette and a tuna casserole. I can cook better than some of my brothers and sisters!

I have 14 brothers and sisters, and I am proud to be able to do the things they do.

I have a job, a bank account, a library card, lots of friends and lots of things to do in Nicholasville. At my school, I learn to do things that will help make my life better. What I learn in school will help me for the rest of my life.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHERISE WEST, DARE PROGRAM, ST. PAUL, MN

Drugs!A problem the world has faced for years. Crack,Coccaine,Pot,and the ever new Ice, all after your mind, each one taking A diffrent course to control your thinking. Do you want drugs to control how you think? Or do you want to control how you think? After taking drugs you no longer think for yourself. The drugs will cause you to lie, cheat and steal. You can not be the person you want to become because you can no longer think for yourself, the drugs think for you.

There's choices to be made, things to be done. It's all up to you. Your life is in your hands. Each decision you make has an impact on your life in the future. Critical thinking is the key to help you become successful in decision making.

There are ways to stay drug free. There are ways to say "no". At J. J. Hill School in St. Paul, Minnesota, I learned how to say "no" through the program called D.A.R.E., DRUG ABUSE RESISTANCE EDUCATION. I think every student should experience this education. Let all children learn how to say "no".

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF JARED KING, DARE PROGRAM, NORTH BRANCH, MN

The main problems for kids today are drugs, pollution, and getting along with other nations in the world, understanding different cultures. My school has programs to help us understand what we face today.

D.A.R.E. One of these programs is DARE. Dare Abuse Resistance Education helps kids cope with drugs and feelings.

FRENCH CLASSROOM IN AMERICA I also think the student exchange program is really good. Both kids from each country can learn what other kids from different cultures are like. French kids came to the elementary school to spend three weeks with us. I got to learn what their culture was like from them. They didn't know a lot of English, we didn't know a lot of French. Our student, Jerome, enjoyed Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. It was really sad when he left, he had been with us for three weeks. It was like you were losing a member of my family.

It changed how I view the world. I learned that kids are kids, people are people. You play like a kid, even in France. Their parents are the way most parents are. If you are a human being you are a human being.

MAINSTREAM CROSS-GRADE PROGRAM When I was in the Caboose, a 4th and 5th grade mixed with all abilities classroom, at our school, we went on a winter camping experience at the YMCA camp near Eveleth in northern Minnesota. Some Native Americans came in and did the dances for men and women. They showed us how to use herbs and harvest wild rice with two sticks. That was fun. We went snowshoeing, saw deer beds and feces, went horseback riding, and did weavings.

These kinds of programs are important in school. You get to see and actually do what the Native Americans and workers on the Iron Range did, and we got to know what it would have been like to live in that much snow and you got a taste of what it would be like to live then.

INVOLVE FAMILIES We had a family day in the Caboose. It was a big track and field and picnic day. We did square dancing, then we went and got a mom or dad and danced with them. The parents didn't know what to do. It was real fun.

It is important to involve families in school. They experience what art and math and reading are like. Then parents know what the kids like and what they are doing in school.

INDEPENDENT STUDY I liked IDS, independent study. We would do projects. We learned much about pollution as a real problem, we need to open our eyes and minds to see what we can do about pollution. There are a lot of things we can do. The problem is the older people who just don't want to think about it. They aren't going to be around to see the world be covered in trash.

Oil is so hard to clean up, you just can't go get a shovel and scoop it up and toss it in a trash can. It's there, Exxon and the other oil companies should be more careful. We're running out of fossil fuels, we need to learn how to use them so they won't pollute.

Pollution is killing our animals. If I have kids when I grow up I'd like them to actually see an elephant or cheetah, not just hear about them. I've seen pictures of the Do-Do bird and passenger pigeon but I'll never see one.

We did a unit on the future. At the end a friend and I made a future city under water and presented the project to our class. You learn from other kids, they tell it from a kids point of view. It's interesting and easier to understand. We learned how to work with other kids, and other people.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROSSI BISTODEAU, DARE PROGRAM, NORTH BRANCH, MN

Hello, my name is Rossi Bistodeau. I have attended North Branch Elementary School since kindergarten. I have been involved in some programs and activities in our school that are great.

D.A.R.E. D.A.R.E., Drug Abuse Resistance Education, is an excellent program. D.A.R.E. teaches us how to say no, how to deal with stress, what drugs have to do with self esteem, and why to stay off drugs.

There are 8 ways to say no. I'll just name a few, such as the broken record --- Just say "NO" as many times as needed. Another one is walking away. Say "NO" and walk away. The last one I'm going to mention is changing the subject. D.A.R.E. teaches us that when you get stressed out we should talk to somebody, and if there is nobody you can trust then write it down on paper and if all fails, hit your pillow, that always works for me.

D.A.R.E. greatly stresses that if you have a low self esteem you are more suseptable to drugs and to use them to try to keep your self esteem up. One other thing and probably the most important, is why to say no to drugs. We have watched movies and films, and learned facts like when a person takes hallucinogen they see faces melting off heads and trees trying to grab them to us. It may be fiction but to them it is all very real.

D.A.R.E.'s style of teaching is very good. They have the kids put in groups and act out both points of view. They have police officers come into your classroom and teach. My officers were Special Agent Colin Comer and Special Agent Neil Johnson.

OTHER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES I think, I always knew I would stay straight but if I was put in that situation I wouldn't have known what to say without D.A.R.E. I've been involved in a number of extra curricular activities such as Oddesy of the Mind, Science Olympiad, Math Olympiad and Young Writer's Club and Young Inventors Competition. D.A.R.E. has helped me stay off drugs so that I can do these activities.

Thanks for your time and concern about the Minnesota children's thoughts about school.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN BROWN, MISSISSIPPI JOB CORPS, MERIDIAN, MS

I have been in several foster homes. When I first went to a foster home I was sad. I felt very lonely because I could not be with my brothers and sisters. Even in some foster homes I was mistreated. In one foster home they made us pick out of five big fields. We had to get up at five o'clock a.m. just to pick vegetables, watermelons, and peanuts. That was very tiresome! I have also been in three different shelters. during the time I was in these shelterrs. I was treated like I was somebody. That made me feel good. While in the shelters we had a lot of fun and activities in which we could participate in. One of the shelters had poor food service.

After I was placed back with my mother. it seemed like things just would not work out. I then decided to enroll in the Mississippi Job Corps where i could obtain my G.E.D. and get a skill in carpentry. This will give me someting to look forward to in the future. I feel like the Mississippi Job Corps can help me meet the requirements I need to be sucessful in life. In the future I would like to have a well established job, that hopefully, I could make a career out of.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TINA SCHEAFER, PROJECT GAIN, JACKSON, MS

My name is Tina Scheafer. I recently turned 18 years old. I am the oldest child of four children. I originally became a ward of the State in 1984. For two years I lived in several foster homes and shelters. I returned home in 1986, and was placed back in foster care in 1988. I came from a very abusive and unhappy family. When leaving my home the last time, I realized that I was going to have to learn to become independent. I came to Southern Christian Services in Mississippi in August of 1989.

When I first heard about Project G.A.I.N. I was very confused and I didn't think I would fit in or make it in this program. I knew this would be my last placement before I would be on my own. It was very hard thinking about taking care of myself and trying to make goals and plans that I didn't think I could accomplish.

The beginning was hard, but the staff and myself took one step at a time by building my self esteem and convincing me that I could make plans and goals and accomplish them.

My first challenge was obtaining my G.E.D. With staff and peer encouragement this goal was easy. While working on my G.E.D. I maintained two part-time jobs. My next challenge was a tough one. I enrolled in a Junior College taking 18 hours. I quit the two part-time jobs to devote my time to studying. I was very happy with the idea of being in college, and I felt very positive about my future.

The staff of Southern Christian Services helped me locate a government job specifically for college students. I am currently employed with the Veterans Administration Medical Center as an assistant to the Occupational Therapists. I am very proud of what I have accomplished both emotionally and professionally. In addition, I am very pleased with how I've seen the program work for others in Project G.A.I.N. As with myself, I have seen the other residents accomplish many of their goals and plans.

I am the first foster child in the custody of the Department of Human Services in Mississippi to be allowed to live in an apartment supervised by the State/Southern Christian Services.

Since living independently I have experienced problems as well as accomplishments. I've faced lonliness, financial struggles, and the feeling of not being part of the group. Through my struggles I have had the support of Southern Christian Services staff and residents. In addition, I have returned to provide support to residents and I have been available in times of crisis. I still have several goals to accomplish. I plan to continue my education and obtain my degree in Occupational Therapy. I plan to become more financially responsible. By creating a savings account I will be able to more effectively meet my own needs; such as buying a car, and possibly continuing my education further than a Bachelors degree.

Because I have been in placements as long as I have, I recognize that there are needs to be met for foster children. There needs to be more programs for homeless teenagers, young unmarried mothers and there should be more of an effort placed on keeping siblings together. There should be more of an emphasis on counseling and aftercare services. Family counseling should be provided immediately after the child is placed in foster care. New programs for shelter care should be investigated and updated.

I feel better prepared to meet life's challenges after having the experience of a program like Project G.A.I.N.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF KELLY SANCHEZ, NEW FUTURES SCHOOL, ALBUQUERQUE, NM

Dear Governor Carruthers:

I am Kelly Sanchez 17, of Albuquerque, New Mexico. I presently attend New Futures School for parenting teen-age mothers. I am the mother of a two year old beautiful girl, Erin.

Before I started at New Futures School it was very hard for me to attend daily and keep up with my studies. Drugs were also a big issues. At all schools students come face to face with drug abuse. Either its you or your friends that are users. I was a very frequent user until I became pregnant with Erin, and got very seriously involved with her father who soon became my husband. My boyfriend was a very important part of me getting on the road to living a life without drugs.

My father thought it was best to either get an abortion or give her up for adoption, but I choose to parent Erin. My boyfriend also choose to support me in my choice.

Soon after I started attending New Futures early in my ninth grade year, I gave birth to my little girl. It was a very exciting experience. New Futures prepared me for labor and delivery. Although New Futures has academic classes it has child birth classes that are required courses. Also, students have to work one hour per day in one of our 4 nurseries to receive credit. This also gives students situations to learn from, so that at home with our children we will have knowledge of what to do in certain instances.

In the middle of my tenth grade year I married my boyfriend and have been married for almost 2 years.

Marriage is hard for a young teen-ager who is also a mother, but the counseling at New Futures is a tremendous help in solving martial problems and problems with my daughter. Not only the counselors but the teachers as well. This is my 4th and final year at New Futures. Soon I will be attending college, but without New Futures School I probably would have been a high school drop out with no chance to go to college. Programs like New Futures do make a big difference for youth today.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ALVINO LOVATO, FUTURES THROUGH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM, ALBUQUERQUE, NM

On June 1989 I had the opportunity to attend the Futures Through Leadership Program in Albuquerque. I was very happy when I was selected to be among twenty-four other students from the Southwest.

The leadership program has provided me with a great knowledge of today's society. The most valuable lessons I have learned have been to accept responsibility and self-confidence in order to be a successful leader.

In today's society we deal with so many things that we must ask ourselves "Where do we want to be in the future?"...especially when you are dealing with two worlds: my traditional Indian ways and the white mans' society.

Throughout the leadership program I learned to understand the value of these cultures where people are the most valuable asset.

I come from a very traditional family at Santo Domingo Pueblo and am very involved with my community's way of life. As the eldest in my family, I have a big responsibility to be a good role model in my home. I have grown as a role model for my younger sister and brothers, and am a leader for other youth in the pueblo, too. I am working with some of my friends to start a Youth Club at home. I want to teach others some of the skills I learned at Futures.

Now, I have no fear in communicating with people. I have overcome my shyness because I have gained great experience in public speaking. I have had occasion to speak at six public functions. I have also spoken at my own village, where I shared my experiences with our great leader Governor Ernie Lovato. I admire him because of his great leadership abilities. He is a mentor for me.

As we all dream for our future, Gov. Lovato and I, Alvino Lovato, dream of the year 2000 where I may have the opportunity to be the Governor of my Tribe, Santo Domingo. I have self-confidence in moving my people in this great democracy.

This is why I feel that the leadership program is so vital to me as a minority, whereas I may not feel this way if I had not attended this great program. It has touched my heart greatly, and has opened my eyes to look into the future, with a positive eye.

I have been sharing my experiences with my other young Indian friends and have encouraged them to look into this program because it is a great program. They, too, will gain the kind of knowledge I have gained.

I have self-confidence that I will make a great Ambassador and represent my Tribe with great respect. I hope I will have the opportunity to utilize my leadership abilities soon.

Thank you for your consideration,

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ALISON BAMERT, ADVANCED EDUCATION PROGRAM, MAYFIELD, NM

While the public school experience can be frightening and confusing for many, gifted students in the Las Cruces Public Schools are given a unique opportunity which is both educationally and personally rewarding. The Advanced Education Program is designed to provide a challenging academic program, along with personal counseling, peer group sessions, and on the job work experience. My involvement with the AEP program has allowed me to receive the personal attention I need, without coddling or secluding me from my friends. AEP is definitely a program that works, as any student who has been involved with the group will gladly tell you.

At the center of the AEP program is the belief that unless gifted students are challenged, they will be too bored to live up to their full potential. I will be the first to tell you that I sometimes wish I were enrolled in easier classes, like many of my friends, but these instances are few and far between. I know that my best work is created only by striving for something which seems nebulous and distant, and you can't beat the feeling you experience when you accomplish something that seemed so difficult. AEP has allowed me to encounter this joy of learning by giving me the freedom to accelerate in subjects which come easily to me. I have never felt like a brainy nerd though; in fact, people in my advanced classes soon forget that I'm a year younger than they are. This level of comfort, which has been achieved by every AEP student I've encountered, is due to the fact that we are encouraged to develop in more ways that just scholastically. We are urged to strive socially, extracurricularly, and personally as well. My creative endeavors were never treated as second rate by my AEP facilitators, for they recognize that being gifted doesn't just end in the classroom. Therefore, AEP doesn't create only smart students, it creates well-developed people as well.

Another bonus of being in AEP is that we are privileged enough to receive the personal attention most of our peers are denied. School counselors are generally flooded with students, so it is nice to know that there is always someone there to talk to who knows more than your name and your schedule conflicts. AEP facilitators are overflowing with scholarship information, as well as news about summer programs, essay contests, and events that may be of interest. Even though I've had very few problems in my high school career, its always nice to have Mrs. Swaim drop by "just to make sure everything is ok." Most students don't have anyone that is interested in their progress, and I think that's really sad. I believe that one of the reasons AEP kids are so successful is that they have support from adults, their parents and their facilitators. I know that I would be scared if I were completely alone in high school.

Peer group meetings are another source of support for students, from dealing with resumes to scholastic pressures. These groups are indeed helpful. Another exciting opportunity AEP gave me was the chance to be a summer intern at the District Attorney's Office. In coordination with the local EXCEL program, AEP students are able to pick an internship site of their choice, which provides practical work experience as well as academic credit. While AEP services are fabulous, I believe that the personal attention given to the students in their quests for knowledge is what makes AEP a program that works. I feel that it has been a significant factor in my personal and scholastic growth, and that it provides gifted students with exactly what they need: caring, challenge, support, and the skills to accomplish whatever they desire.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHRISTOPHER DENTON VIGIL, YOUTH WORKING FOR YOUTH, LOS ALAMOS, NM

Good afternoon, my name is Christopher Vigil. I am honored to represent our 47th state, New Mexico, and more specifically, the County of Los Alamos.

Los Alamos is situated among the 10,000 foot high Jemez Mountains and, as stated in an 1988 'Omni' magazine article, its "...teenagers display an innocence not seen since the days of Leave It to Beaver". The article, however failed to note that, for entertainment, from boredom, and from pressures for academic prowress, many teens of the county, "head to the hills" to 'party with drugs and alcohol.

I am proud to be able to make a positive statement to you today concerning this situation. A group, Youth Working for Youth, an official Board within the County, was created six years ago and is still making a strong and visible statement to, for and by the teens of the community. YWY, as it is referred to, is run totally by peer-elected officers, with adult input being kept to an absolute minimum. Participants in YWY attend idea and prevention workshops regularly. The mandate is to imagine, produce and present drug-free alternative activities for the high-schoolers. Creativity has become reality with activities such as bike hikes, camping, dances, amateur band shows, and esteem building presentations to the elementary and middle schools to list only a few. "Just Say No" is <u>not</u> the way YWY works!, but rather, "Just say <u>YES</u>" ...meaning anything is possible when it comes to fun drug-free activities! There is no membership, the motto being "You don't join this group, you ARE this group". All healthy ideas, from teens, presented to the group are welcomed and their production encourgaged. The high school student population, and indeed the community as a whole, has come to recognize YWY as a "Can Do" group.

I have learned and have also been shocked by how widespread drug-abuse is with teens in my own community. YWY has taught me how to effectively use positive peer pressure to fight boredom with activities and friendship. YWY has also shown me that positive productivity can raise self esteem. Teens know what teens need; teens know what will work. YWY gives teens the opportunities to make a positive difference. YWY offers teens an alternative to abusing themselves with drugs and alcohol thereby abusing their future and the future, the hope, and the inspiration of our country.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MORGAN LLOYD, HEAD START/EARLY INTERVENTION, WHEATLAND, PA

At four years old I couldn't talk. I tried real hard but I just couldn't. When I did talk, it sounded like a foreign language. Not even my parents understood me. They were real worried. I only had a year until I was to start kindergarten and they were worried I would not be ready.

I was afraid of going to kindergarten. All of the kids in the neighborhood made fun of my talking. I didn't want to be laughed at. I was angry because no one understood me.

My parents sent me for speech therapy. I went once a week for a half hour. It cost a lot of money and I needed more help to get ready for kindergarten than my parents could afford.

My parents found out that the Farrell Area School District offered help for kids like me through the Head Start Program.

I liked Head Start. The teachers made each of us feel special and no one made fun of me because I couldn't talk well. The speech teacher helped me learn to pronounce words and letters. It was hard work but I had fun.

We listened to stories, sang songs, played games, did crafts, and went on field trips. Lunch was good but I liked snack time best. We also swam.

When I started kindergarten the next year, there were still words that I couldn't say; but most of the time my parents, teachers and friends understood me.

I liked kindergarten. I don't think I would have, if I hadn't been to Head Start first.

Now I am ten years old and an honor roll student. I still see a speech teacher, but I have no trouble reading aloud or making myself understood.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JASON JACKSON, DAY CARE PROGRAM, FARRELL. PA

I WAS ENROLLED IN DAY CARE AT THE FARRELL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT FROM THE TIME I WAS EIGHT WEEKS OLD UNTIL I STARTED KINDERGARTEN.

DURING THOSE YEARS, DAY CARE GAVE ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET AND PLAY WITH OTHER CHILDREN. I LEARNED TO TRUST OTHERS AND DEVELOPED A SENSE OF SHARING. I ALSO LEARNED TO APPRECIATE MY MOTHER. EVEN THOUGH MY MOTHER HAD TO WORK, SHE MADE SURE THAT I HAD A NICE AND SAFE PLACE TO GO WHERE KIND AND LOVING PEOPLE WATCHED OVER ME.

THESE CARE GIVERS ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE DAY CARE PROGRAM AND THEY WILL ALWAYS BE VERY SPECIAL TO ME, ALTHOUGH NO ONE COULD EVER TAKE THE PLACE OF MY MOM.

I LOOKED FORWARD TO DAY CARE EVERY DAY. I MADE NEW FRIENDS AND ENJOYED ALL OF THE FUN ACTIVITIES THAT PRE-SCHOOL KIDS LIKE TO DO. GAMES, CRAFTS, FIELD TRIPS, SNACKS AND LUNCHES MADE DAY CARE THE BEST HOME AWAY FROM HOME.

BECAUSE I ATTENDED DAY CARE, I WAS PREPARED FOR KINDERGARTEN. I HAD THE BASIC SKILLS NECESSARY FOR SCHOOL. I HAD ALSO LEARNED HOW TO INTERACT WITH OTHER CHILDREN. I WAS READY FOR THAT FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.

I REALLY LOVED GOING TO DAY CARE; IT ALLOWED MY MOTHER TO WORK AND GAVE ME A SPECIAL PLACE TO BE.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LAURIE KUHARIK, LATCHKEY PROGRAM, FARRELL, PA

I AM THIRTEEN YEARS OLD AND I WAS IN THE LATCHKEY PROGRAM FOR SIX YEARS. MY MOTHER WORKED FROM EIGHT O' CLOCK IN THE MORNING UNTIL FOUR-THIRTY IN THE AFTERNOON.

I WAS IN THE PROGRAM BECAUSE MY MOTHER LOVED ME AND WORRIED ABOUT ME. SHE DID NOT WANT ME TO BE ALONE AND AFRAID. MY MOTHER COULD NOT AFFORD TO PAY A BABY SITTER EVERY DAY FOR THE HOURS I WOULD BE ALONE AFTER SCHOOL.

MANY TIMES, WHEN CHILDREN ARE HOME ALONE, THEY WATCH TOO MUCH TELEVISION OR THEY GET INTO TROUBLE BECAUSE THEY ARE UNSUPERVISED. MANY CHILDREN DON'T EVEN BOTHER TO GO HOME UNTIL THEIR PARENTS ARRIVE AND OFTEN GET INTO GROUPS WITH OTHER CHILDREN IN THE SAME SITUATION. THIS IS WHEN MANY OF THE PLANS ARE MADE WHICH LEAD TO TROUBLE LATER.

MY AFTER SCHOOL TIME IN THIS PROGRAM WAS SPENT DOING HOMEWORK OR PLAYING GAMES WITH THE YOUNGER CHILDREN. IT WAS NICE HAVING HELP WITH MY HOMEWORK WHEN I NEEDED IT. AFTER SPENDING SO MUCH TIME WITH THE YOUNGER CHILDREN, I THINK I WOULD LIKE TO BE A PEDIATRICIAN WHEN I GROW UP.

I LIKED THE LATCHKEY PROGRAM BECAUSE I DIDN'T HAVE TO GO HOME BY MYSELF AND STAY IN AN EMPTY HOUSE. MY MOTHER DIDN'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ME BECAUSE SHE KNEW I WAS IN A SAFE AND SUPERVISED PLACE. IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE THIS PROGRAM TO KEEP YOUNGER CHILDREN BUSY AND OUT OF TROUBLE.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARTHA GRANADOS, ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAM (ESL), EL PASO, TX

In our country there are millions of people who don't speak English. This is a problem that English as a Second Language (ESL) programs are helping to solve.

My name is Martha Granados. I'm 16 years old and a 10th grader at Socorro High School in El Paso, Texas. I'm a product of an ESL program. When I began studies in the U.S. I didn't know any English. I finished the 8th grade when I was 14 years old. When I got into high school it was real difficult being in classes where I didn't understand and the ESL program helped me to understand more English as well as trust and believe in myself.

There are about 424 students served by this program. Last year in October, 1989, Socorro was awarded a special alternative instruction grant known as the SABE Project throught OBELMA (Office of Bilingual Education and Language Minority Affairs). The monies which were received by my high school have made a big difference at my high school. Most significant was the computer lab and the lab teachers which were made possible by the grant and all the software which has been purchased. Through the lab we are able to better learn our other subjects. We also can develop and print our written projects. Many materials such as literature books have been purchased as well. Two instructional aides were hired and they are available to us for small group work or in the classroom in a large group setting. The project coordinator and her staff monitor our scheduling needs very closely as well as our progress. It also trains teachers in other subjects to adapt their teaching by using ESL strategies and techniques.

Probably the biggest change is in attitudes. Teachers now think of ESL students as "all our kids" instead of the old attitude that if students spoke no English they had "no brains". This is a concern to ESL students no matter where they live in our country. Through the SABE program great changes are being made. The ESL program has grown over the last five years from 50 students to over 250 students today.

The ESL Program helped me to enjoy many activities at school like student council, and color guard. The ESL Program has always been there to help me out.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF GABE PRATT, 4-H CLUB, ELIASVILLE, TX

How do you describe 4-H? How do you explain to someone that it is a way of life, not just another social club? How do you explain that 4-Hers are different, a cut above the average young person?

I guess I could start by saying our motto and pledge. "To make the best better, I pledge my Head to clearer thinking, my Heart to greater loyalty, my Hands to larger service and my Health to better living for my club, my community, my country, and my world." 4-H is a family experience, with equal involvement of parents and children. It brings families closer together as they share work and play. I think our motto is a good one for anyone of any age to live by.

"I pledge my Head to clearer thinking." 4-H teaches young people how to use their heads in lots of situations. There are numerous projects in 4-H that require in-depth study and training. For example, the grass identification, horse and livestock judging teams and the entomology teams have to study hard to win a first place at district or state competition. We also learn parliamentary procedure during our meetings. Learning a method demonstration and having the courage to get up in front of others and give it is another example of having to use your head. Doing a 4-H record book also teaches us how to keep good records of our activities and our income and expenses on our animal projects.

"I pledge my Heart to greater loyalty". 4-H meetings start out by reciting the pledge of alligence to our national flag and then the 4-H motto and pledge. 4-Hers also have loyalty to one another. Very close friendships are made in the different projects we share and the clubs we are in. There are many friends made during the teen leader labs and also on trips like the Washington-Focus and the State Congress trips. 4-Hers look forward to seeing their friends from year-to-year at the State Roundup too.

"I pledge my Hands to larger service." Community service plays a big role in each 4-H career. It is stressed even above project participation. A large portion of our record books is dedicated to leadership and community service. 4-Hers are taught to share and help others by involving them in such activities as the Jerry Lewis MDA telethon, County Health fairs, American Heart and Cancer Assoc. drives. The Bible verse that states "It is more blessed to give than to receive" becomes very real when you are involved in this type of service.

"I pledge my Health to better living." 4-Hers can learn nutrition through different projects offered but such things as clean living and no drugs or alcohol are certainly stressed. I have been on many trips and have seldom seen a 4-Her smoking and have never seen one take drugs or drink! Maybe the kids that do those things don't even join 4-H, I don't know. But maybe 4-H keeps those that are in it from being that type of kid.

"For my club, my community, my country and my world." No man lives unto himself. What I do will affect other people in some way, maybe not much, but there is an effect. What our club accomplishes helps our community and what our community does effects our country and our good old USA effects the world!

Our county 4-H program is very strong I'm proud to say. We have a very capable office staff and extremely dedicated adult leaders. We have approx. 250 young people enrolled in 4-H and we offer almost every project available - we even have a new one of our own, the mentor program. The suggestion was made by a 4-H member to start a big brother - big sister program. We thought it would be an excellent way for our older 4-H members to put to use the leadership skills they have been taught through their years in 4-H. They could reach out to youngsters at a time when they are developing into responsible individuals. It is recognized that role models play an important function in shaping the minds of young people. The prerequisites to be in the program were: at least 16 years or older, have a driver's license and be willing to spend at least 4 hours a month with a 3rd gradar not involved in 4-H. These younsters were chose by their school teachers. They were children who <u>needed</u> extra attention and good role models. There have been many favorable reports from the teachers saying that they could actually see an improvement in the youngsters attitudes. The teachers seemed to think that the role model put forth by the older 4-Her helped.

. . Our county also has a group of senior and junior 4-H Ambassadors. These 4-H members have gone to various organizations in the county and given programs promoting 4-H. Our county is very supportive of the 4-H program as a whole and feels free to call upon the 4-H members for support in their programs. We provide the "leg work" for lots of community programs and activities. They know we will do the work because our adult leaders stress community service so much. However, if we as young people learn what giving is all about now, then it will be second nature by the time we are in the position of community and national leaders.

So, as you can see, it is rather difficult to adequately explain 4-H. The only way to understand 4-H is to jump in head-first and <u>live</u> it to the fullest!

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARIA LUSIA MARTINEZ, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR THE HANDICAPPED, EL PASO, TX

My name is Maria Luisa Martinez. I am a student at Socorro High School in El Paso, Texas. I am fifteen years of age and in the tenth grade. I have a small family. It consists of two brothers. I am the only girl in my family. My oldest brother is married and has two children. The next brother is 17 and is a junior at my high school. There are only the three of us at home. My mother and father are divorce. My mother generally works in a clothing factory but she is not working now. My school provides my brother and I with free lunch and breakfast.

I am representing a program called VEH Business Office Clerical. VEH stands for vocational education for the handicap. In this program I have learned office skills such as filing, filling out business forms, word processing, proofreading, how to answer the telephone, referencing, and computer graphics. The program has been in progress for four years. Approximately 20-30 students are served each year in this program. Students in this program have the opportunity to join a professional organization called Business Professionals of America. I joined Business Professionals of America last year. I became very active in this organization. I was involved in fundraising activities, social events, special projects and community work.

In March of last year I was one of 3 student selected by my teacher to go to San Antonio ,Texas, for the Business Professionals of America State Leadership Conference. I had a wonderful experience. First of all I got to fly to the conference. We stayed in a beautiful hotel. On the day of the contest, my advisor took my team which consisted of three VEH students to our contest sight and we competed in a contest called Computer-Aided Graphics. It was exciting to compete with other students from all over the state of Texas. During our four day stay we got to meet many new and exciting people. We even got to go to Sea World which I had never been to. This year we are going to Houston ,Texas, to compete in Computer-Aided Graphics. Competing at this leadership conference has helped me to gain more confidence in myself and my abilities, has helped me to become more independent and has helped me to increased a more positive image of myself.

My future plans are to finish high school and go to college. Because I have learned many office skills in VEH Business Office Clerical, I feel that I can get an entry job in an office to help pay for my college education. I feel that I am computer literate and this becomes a necessary skill when working in any office. I will also be able to type my own term papers for college classes which will help me to make better grades.

I am very fortunate to be in my second year of VEH Business Office Clerical. I have learned so much about computers and office skills. This program has given me skills that I will not only use in my personal life but in college and the work world. The federal money provided for this program is well-spent.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GUS ZAMORA, ADVANCED HONORS PROGRAM, EL PASO, TX

First of all, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Gus Zamora. I'm from a Mexican family of six. This includes my mother and father, my three younger sisters, and me. I am fifteen years old and a sophomore at Socorro High School in El Paso, Texas.

I am representing the Advanced Honors Program at Socorro High School. This program not only serves me, but hundreds of other students with special aptitudes. The program has helped me overcome some obstacles. One of these obstacles was my discipline. When I was in junior high, I never set time for my homework. I would stay up late doing or wait until early the next morning. This all ended when I entered high school. There I had a planned schedule, which managed my time. Knowing the teachers trust in me, I have to complete my homework; now I have good discipline as well.

This program can help any student. It's only up to the student if he or she want to take advantage of it. It makes one use one's mind by taking one beyond thinking limits. The program helps both the students that really put all of their effort into school as well as those who need a little extra help. It teaches most of all that we are the controllers of our lives.

Hoping to graduate in the advanced honors program, I think I will find the career a want which is to become a doctor. This year I am studying three honors courses, geometry, algebra II, and English II, along with four other courses. But in order to accomplish my goal I must not stop, but keep on going, gain confidence, and maintain the my work ethic. There is no finish line. I must set and achieve new horizons.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TIM KING, SUMMER CAMP, PROGRAM, PALMETTO, SC

My name is Tim King and I attend Palmetto High School. While in the middle school, I was chosen by a special counselor, to take part in a summer camp. The program was to get me ready for high school. It was fun because we got to go on trips and do lots of fun activities. While I was there I realized that everything can't be like you want it to be. I had a little trouble with the other campers at first. We had to attend 3 classes each day. The Stanford test was fun because I got the most improved award. I raised my math and reading 5 grade levels. Counselors at camp were very friendly. Even when we made them mad they always helped us when we needed them. They showed us that people can work together and get along with each other.

Now that I am in high school I intend to finish and get my diploma. This program has helped me to do real good in school. I've not been in any sort of trouble and don't intend to get into any. All I want to do is finish school with high grades and I know I can do it with counselors, teachers, and my parents to help me. I just got over a difficult time at home with my family being separated.

I think the reason I'm doing so well is because of the special counselors in this program. I now have all A's in my classes and good conduct reports. Each day I see a good grade, I think back to camp when I was sitting in those class rooms, studying and scoring high on my Stanford test.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SABRINA BRADFORD, PEOPLE FOR PEOPLE HOMEWORK CENTER PROGRAM, FLORENCE, SC

My name is Sabrina Virginia Bradford and I am an eleven year old sixth grade student at Theodore Lester Elementary School in Florence, South Carolina. I have attended the People for People, Inc. Homework Center for two years. My center is open Monday through Thursday for an hour and a half each day.

The People for People, Inc. Homework Center is a good place to complete class activities. I bring my school books so I can work on homework assignments for the next day. I receive assistance from two certified teachers and volunteers.

This program has really helped me to grow and see that learning can take place after school hours. Watching other children work at the center makes me aware of things that I can do to help myself in school. I am encouraged to work harder and my attitude about homework has changed.

Being a member of this program keeps me away from television, the telephone and playing before school work is completed. Having a set time to come to the center and study has helped me to organize my assignments and work harder.

My grades improved in some subjects and that helped me realize hard work and good grades would help me in the future. Other students in the center have improved their grades, too. The Homework Center Program helps us help ourselves.

The Homework Center has given me an opportunity to help younger students with special needs. I help them with their homework after I have finished mine. I have seen how pleased they are when their work is correct, neat and complete.

The People for People, Inc. Homework Center has been recognized in a statewide publication of The Children's Trust Fund, "It's Time", and was presented an award by the South Carolina State Department of Education for their contribution to public education. This Homework Center Program was also featured in a national publication, "School Child Care Report". There are seven other People for People, Inc. homework centers besides mine in Florence County. Last year, about three hundred and fifty children attended these centers. The Homework Centers really work!

Being a participant in a program that is recognized by state and national organizations makes me feel proud. The Homework Center has helped me understand that I can feel better about myself when I am prepared for school. Other students feel good about themselves, too. The Homework Center has also helped me understand that I can feel better about myself when I can help someone else learn and grow.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF REBECCA S. NATHAN, OAK GROVE RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT CENTER, CHARLESTON, SC

Today's youth needs more guidance than ever. Oak Grove and hundreds of facilities like it try to provide the guidance and support young people need to grow and mature in a manner which not only benefits them, but everyone else as well, because today's youth are tomorrow's leaders.

Every time social service budgets are cut, it's like telling children no one can or will help them, and so, they think that no one wants to.

Carolina Youth Development Center in Charleston, SC is private, nonprofit and made up of six programs under one Board of Directors. The common thread shared by all of the programs is service to the needs of children and their families. My program, Oak Grove, is a residential treatment program for young people who do not need to be in a hospital setting, but who do need a therapeutic environment to work through emotional issues.

In my case, Carolina Youth Development Center works closely with other community based programs such as Cities in Schools, an alternative school for 9th and 10th graders who have for some reason found that normal public high school is no longer working for them; or the right situation for them to be in. Cities in Schools offers an option besides dropping out and helps the students work towards their high school diploma. Cities in School has mental health and substance counselors on staff, in order to better their chances of helping the students. These people hope to shine a little light on the dark lives of these children.

The following poem expresses some of my thoughts and feelings about Oak Grove:

Oak Grove provides treatment, a warm helping hand
For the children who need it, because they understand
What it's like to be lonely, hurting and sad
So they show the kids that not everything's bad.

They work with the families, not only the child
Taking things step by step, not mile by mile.
Self esteem they will raise from the child who thought
That they were no good, 'cause that's what they'd been taught.

But the space that they need, and the funds are not here
To place all the children in need of their care.

Unfortunately funding for non-medical, therapeutic programs is generally inadequate. For every 100 applicants to Oak Grove, less than five can be accommodated.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SARAH BEHAN, NATURAL HELPERS PROGRAM, BRANDON, SD

My dad sings while he cooks. It's habit I suppose. Ever since I can remember, I've heard him sing, "I love life and I want to live," in an exuberant voice. That's all I know of it and I don't even know if it's a song. But I do know he believes the message and has instilled in me that same love. The love of being alive.

I'm involved in a program at school called Natural Helpers. It's a peer counseling group; a cross section of a few teachers and many kids, elected by the student body. Teens naturally tend to confide in and trust their friends before going to an adult. This program capitalizes on that relationship by training those who are recognized by their peers as trustworthy and willing to listen.

Every year I go to a training camp and each time we are taught a simple recipe to use. It is called the helping skill and it serves anyone who uses it. The helping skill involves letting my friends know when I'm concerned. That's all it usually takes to have them open up. Then by using questions, I can help them identify the problem, possible solutions, and their consequences. I've been trained never to give advice and confidentiality is a must, unless the problem is too big to deal with or invloves abuse, suicide or other major issues. Then I know to go to an adult advisor who then deals with it by using resources in Sioux Falls such as Threshhold and Charter. Other steps to the helping skill include finding out what your friend is planning to do and expressing support- letting them know you're there for them. It sounds simple and it is, but it's effects aren't.

Last year, during school, I was approached by a friend. She's one of those happy go lucky individuals, always seen with a smile. That day the smiles were gone and it was easy to see that something was up. I asked and got the reply, "Just a little fight with some friends," and a quiver of the chin. Saying she'd rather not talk about it, she turned to leave. I was about to let her go but caught her and told her that if she felt like it later, I'd be there. By sixth period I got a note. That note revealed that her little tiff was just a symptom of family problems and suicidal thoughts. It made me think of my Dad's song, and I couldn't understand how someone could disagree with it.

Because of my strong belief in life and the value of it I wouldn't have known how to react. I might have done something fatal like trying to talk her out of it, dealing with it myself or promising not to tell. Thanks to the Natural Helpers program I knew what to do. I went immediately to our school counselor and the situation was handled from there.

I am honored to be a part of a program that is so succesful. Succesful because it has helped at least one person, because it involves kids helping kids. The knowledge and skills I have learned will be with me for the rest of my life. They will continue to help me help others, to let them know of the value of life. I can't think of an idea more beautiful than that.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TAMI RAE KNOX, ALCOHOL/DRUG PROGRAM, ST. FRANCIS, SD

My name is Tami Knox.I'm 14 years old. I am currently attending St.Francis Indian School. I will be in the 8th grade this year.I have 5 sisters 3 are older then me and they are Gerolyn;23Jenn;21,Dana;19.My other 2 sisters are Jaime;7,Katie;3.I have 2 brothers and they are,Gerald;9 and Shaun;1.My mother and father are Lynelle and Gerald Sr.In my past I had alot of problems due to the fact that I was using alcohol and chemicals to escape my problems but I was only making them worse. This went on for about a year and a half before I had finally relized that I had a problem and that Ineeded some help,I was too scared to ask so I just kept on doing what I was doing.So my mom finally went to go and get me some help.That's when I went to OUR HOME RE-DISCOVERY in Huron then when I came back I went back to my same old using friends so I fell back to where I had started from. So my mom got in contact with Alta Bordeaux and Stacey Kepples.They are the counselors of the Drug and Alcohol Prevention Program at St.Francis Indian School.So then I started to go and see them then after a while I realized I was starting to get back on my feet again.So they are the ones I really look up to but I can't always be depending on them cause I have to learn how to work on my own. But when I needed to talk to someone they were always there for me and for many other kids who needed help just like I did.They helped us bring up our self-esteem, self-confidence, and beliefs.If there wasn't a Drug and Alcohol Prevention Program then we might of been out still using.The place where we go to have our meetings is a place we call Micheal Henery Youth Center.We go there to express how we feel,play games about our feelings,watch movies about drug and alcohol abuse,and then we eat snacks afterwards. It is a successful program that's what I think.More students will be coming after they find out that they have a problem too. I think that they are scared just like I was before I hid come in to this program.And I also think that the parents should get more involved with the programs that other people are putting on for them.The kids out there who are running around and getting sent to jail should be in another part where they can express thier feelings instead of getting out of jail and going to go find another party

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF TIMOTHY SCHMIDT, IMPROVISATIONAL THEATER PROGRAM, PIERRE, SD

"Though a shadow has all around you and your dreams don't always come true
There's a special part of you
But Even the mightiest knight cannot fight for what is right if they're using a broken sword."

These words to a special song, "I Am Somebody", express one of the greater problems facing young people today, the problem of self-respect. Is it all right to be "myself"? What do I do about all these expectations that I face? Who will be there to help me through? An Improvisational theater troupe can answer or help answer all these questions. It can mend the "broken sword", make it whole, and give the hope for new dreams.

Improvisational theater is a program which combines the art of acting and the tenderness of listening to effectively educate youth about making decisions. The troupe works out the basis for a short one to two minute skit addressing the problem and then presents the open-ended scene and follows up with questions that promote audience participation. It can cover a wide variety of subjects, ranging from getting bullied around on the play ground, to alcohol and drugs, to dealing with eating disorders. "Improv" is sponsored by the Department of Drug and Alcohol Abuse and by the Division of Highway Safety. It is a five year old state-wide program with over seventy-five troupes scattered throughout small towns and large cities. Improv focuses on local teens and their ability to help solve local problems. They have the power to help their peers bring out the "specialness" in each of them.

The unique way this program functions is to form a support group of young people of the community to be available and ready to help any one who wants to reach out. The group consists of a variety of teens. There are "jocks" and "fine arts people", "druggies" and "nerds", Native Americans, African - Americans and Caucasians, and male and female. The objective is to present all sides of a subject in a portrayal of realistic problems so that the audience can effectively explore solutions with the group.

My background has provided me with a special experience which has been part my success in this program and part of the success of the program in the state. My family is a unique blend of varied races, and we celebrate this richness of culture and heritage. Improv is all about being "unique", "special", and "one of a kind". My Improv troupe gives me a place where I don't have to worry about how I act or what I say. I know that I will be accepted for whoever I am. That means a lot to me. I think that all kids need is a place where they are accepted for who they are not for what they pretend to be. An Improv troupe certainly will do that. At our training camp we have a saying, "I am somebody", We say it over and over and it is truly amazing what it does for young people who believe it. It opens their eyes so they can see what a special gift their life really is.

"I am somebody, A promise was made to me
I am somebody even all the times I can't see
That life is special and life is a gift And that gift was given to me"

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LAKEBA HUNTER, PROJECT ADVANCE, ILLINOIS

Being the mother of two children without skills or training I see the need to further my Education, learn a trade to qualify for employment with earnings to provide the best possible life for myself and my children.

I have lots of support from my family. My mother has always encouraged me to go as far as I can educationally. "If you don't want to go to school for yourself, go for your children," she told me. Although I have my family's love, support and encouragement it is still not easy to make it.

I am lucky to have been selected to be a part of Project Advance, a program for teen mothers at the Illinois Department of Public Aid. This program has given me hope for a better life. They have helped me to learn a lot about life: how to make goals and work toward them, the importance of birth control, and child support from my children's father. Since I've been in Project Advance I know I'm a better parent and a better person. My future is even much brighter. In addition to the support of my family I can count on the support of Project Advance.

My case manager Ms. Emma Bailey is a delightful lady, who is a lot like my mother, in fact I think of her as a second mother. She constantly encourages me to go forward, not backwards and reminds me that no matter how hard it is I can advance my goals. It seems as though we have always been friends because I can count on her for needed child care, transportation, help in making decision and just to be there when I need her. To top it off Ms. Bailey is also a lot of fun. I need that when I'm sad.

Project Advance is a mandatory program. That means that to get your public aid check, you must go to school, training or work. With kind support, they have pointed me and many toher teen mothers in the right direction. Many girls in the project have reached their goals. There is no doubt in my mind that I too will be successful.

I'm thankful to be a part of Project Advance. My only wish is that more young mothers could be in this program. They too could build a better future.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TRACI MEYERS, CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIRTY PROGRAM, VIBORG, SD

In the State of South Dakota there are many programs which help children. Children's Home Society is one of these. Children's Home Society, or CHS, is one that works because it has many parts that help children, they help the children who have been taken out of their homes, and they listen to what the children have to say.

Children's Home Society is a place that has many parts. It has a school that teaches children to do better so they can go back to public school. CHS has a home for children who need special attention so they can go back home or to a foster home. They have people that arrange foster care for children who aren't going back home, because they still have problems with their families. They also have special therapy with every child alone, and with their families, who may need help to get along so they can go home.

The Children's Home Society helps children who have been taken out of their home by giving them love, a safe place, and rules that are good for them. It gives them a school because there may have been some problems that happened at the public school, or because Mom or Dad were beating them and they can not concentrate on their work. They give them special help with things that have happened at home. They help the families learn how to treat children so their children can live at home again. CHS sometimes puts children in foster homes. Instead of going home and getting hurt, or having problems again, they can work out their problems in a safe place.

Children's Home Society works because children have problems they need to talk about, so they talk to people who work on getting those problems solved. When I have a problem there are therapists, teachers, and child care counselors I can talk to about my problems. They talk to me and listen to what I have to say. The staff like their jobs helping children. They also like to love and spend time with us. They like us a lot.

My favorite thing about CHS is the activities we do. We ride bikes, go roller skating, ice skating in the winter, and go to parks. At CHS I have been in 4-H, which teaches children new things, and D.A.R.E., which teaches children how to stay off drugs. I feel CHS has helped me most with working with my family to go back home and to public school. I am happy that soon I will be leaving, but I'm sad because I will miss the children and counselors at Children's Home. CHS is a great place to be!

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF MOSHE YEHUDA, WE'VE GOT A NEW ATTITUDE PROGRAM

The Urban Education Partnership Grant, at Johnson School, known as the " We've Got A New Attitude" Program was designed to increase parent participation and achievement, decrease bad behaviors, and improve attendance. The project hopes to change student behaviors by recognizing good behavior. The project also provides students the opportunity to participate in issues in the school through the student council and the student newspaper. Afterschool activities also help students in need of homework help. Special activities encourage parents to participate in their children's education.

The programs provided for many field trips as rewards for good behavior, attendance and excellent achievement. Because I participated in the programs, I learned many things I did not know which are very helpful to me. In the camp program, I learned about microbiology, math and Indian lore. I participated in games and activities that helped me learn to cooperate with others. I learned to be more kind and caring about others.

In the Self-Esteem Program, I learned to be more intelligent about the way I handled problem solving. I learned to try to talk over problems with the people instead of fighting or arguing. I learned to think I was an important person and that my family is also good and important. I learned " It's Not What You Have; It's What You Do With It" is the secret to success.

The private businesses that participate with the school because of this grant have given us a lot of encouragement. One of the programs provided tutoring at North Central College for students in grades four through six. Many students were also able to attend a summer camp and study program at the college. Another program provided special tutoring in science for fifteen students at the Amoco Corporation by employee volunteers.

In conclusion, I would like to say that the Urban Education Partnership Grant- We've Got A New Attitude Program at Johnson School, helped me be more serious about my schoolwork. It helped me feel better about myself and my family. It made me think about my future and set goals for my life. It made me more aware of other people and what they feel and need. It made me feel that others, not just family and teachers care. I hope it will continue at Johnson School. I wish all school children could find the positive things that I found at my school.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KIMBERLY S. DENNIS, PREPARING FOR ADULT LIVING PROGRAM (PAL)

Being in foster care and involved in the P.A.L. Program has helped me a lot through all the tough times that I have undergone. It is not easy being moved from an environment with people who cares, loves and shares the same lifestyle as yourself to live with an unknown family who probably did not care about you in the same way. I will tell you that was the hardest situation I have ever had to go through. I don't or didn't feel in my entire life I would end up with a family of a different race. It is not something one prepares for when one becomes a teenager. At times, I thought God hated me because he made my life Hell by not being able to see my sister or the rest of my family. I always miss them; but while in foster care, I felt as if I had lost them. I would cry myself asleep almost every night for about a month because life was just horrible. I felt alone, scared; and it was a terrifying experience.

Now I have gone to counseling, and I have adapted to my new life. I am working again. I recently purchased a car. These are things the P.A.L. Program helped me to do. With the Preparing for Adult Living Program, I know how to make my own decisions and manage my own money. With the knowledge I knew before I entered the program, I am more mature and I feel that I am in control of my life. The experience of understanding the cultures of a different race has made me believe that everyone is not as they are categorized. I truly love my foster parents, and I feel I owe them my life. They give me the love, care and trust that I never felt when I was living with my real family. Truly, they are "heaven-sent" people, and I am grateful that God sent them to me.

When I go out on my own, I will have all the education from the P.A.L. Program and the little things that the Dombrowskis' (my foster parents) have taught me. In a way, it seems as if it was a miracle for me to be abused as I was, because the outcome of everything done for me by the Department of Children and Family Services has been wonderful.

Thank you.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JACKIE CHIMNERY, IVANNA EUDORA KEAN HIGH SCHOOL, ST. THOMAS, VI

I am a Virgin Islands Child
I am a Jewel.
However, I cannot sparkle unless I am polished.
God, the maker of all servants created the greatest servant of all.
Care.
Care can move mountains.
Care motivates my willingness to learn.
Care expresses love.

As a young Virgin Islander, I am indeed pleased to represent the Ivanna Eudora Kean High School from my native land, St. Thomas. I am indeed overwhelmed and proud.

As a young child, I was always curious for the nourishment that education could provide for me. This has brough me to my sense of place. The educational environment has contributed to my sense of place. The teachers, principals have endowed their knowledge upon this striving young adult. They have all taught me to strive for success.

There have been many obstacles, and challenges placed before the students and Kean High, but with the strength to strive for success, and being reminded that there are adults who care, I knew that we could overcome.

There is not enough equipment to aid in the learning process at Kean High, but as I mentioned before, we have always been taught to strive for success. We have also been faced with many challenges. A few of these challenges include Quiz Bow, and the Communications Art Showcase. As an active participant of the Communication Arts Showcase, I have given a chance to express myself. This fullfilling showcase is an event that allows students to express themselves in various ways, such as Non-Original Poetry, Original Poetry, Choral Reading, Speech, and Drama.

From the words of Janet Jackson's "The Knowledge", she said that we are in a race between education and catastrophe. She also stated that if we want to receive the knowledge, we have got to:

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KISHMA PRINCE, FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS OF AMERICA, ST. THOMAS, VI

What is Future Business Leaders of America? It is a national student organization preparing students for the world of business. Right? Well, partly so-yes, but it goes deeper-much deeper than that. If you applied the nine goals of the association to meet the "needs and wants" of every member, the result would illustrate the organization's true meaning.

Future Business Leaders of America's true meaning becomes clear with the confidence and leadership abilities gained from minor tasks, with the insight gained into the many business careers, and with the ability to understand and relate to people of all walks of life.

Confidence and leadership do not have to be gained solely from organizing and conducting a discount coupon project. Often, it comes with the little things--calling a businessperson, writing a welcome letter to a new chapter, giving a committee report, or being elected local junior treasurer.

As you venture into the community and to conferences and workshops, you meet many people. Because of this exposure, you see and begin to understand and accept people's values, philosophies, and ideas-even though some may be considered different or socially unacceptable. Whether or not you agree with their thoughts and actions is not important. What is important is that you recognize people as individuals.

Future Business Leaders of America members are also blessed to have learned that when climbing the ladder of success to always place a hand up to climb and the other one down to help someone else up. And if you happen to fall there will always be someone to help you back up the ladder of success.

That is what Future Business Leaders of America is all about-the confidence and leadership developed from "little things," the insight gained into the many business careers, and the ability to deal with people regardless of personal differences. That is what makes true business leaders, and that is why I am proud to be America's Future Business Leaders.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GALVIN JONATHAN GUERRERO, DRUG FREE TASK FORCE, SAIPAN, NORTHERN MARIANA

Imagine giving a 16 year old boy candy for staying drug free and frightening a 10 year old girl to death with photographs of dead drugees. This is obviously a haphazard, misdirected solution to the drug problem facing our nation. The Drug Free Task Force of Mount Carmel School was created to prevent any such misfortune. The task force has searched for and experimented with different techniques in approaching different youth groups. It is convinced that only appropriate approaches to particular groups will effectively persuade the youth to follow the task force's motto: "Don't Do It."

One distinct youth group is the elementary student body. The task force approaches elementary students with a message of idealism, in hope of grasping the scarce innocence of childhood. This could be carried on through their teens in regards to drug use. It tries to appeal to their interests and make them feel comfortable with openness through skits and workshops requiring a great deal of audience participation. In other words, the task force attempts to get to the children before anything detrimental does, which is usually the case with youth at the secondary level.

It is the task force's firm conviction that the only way to get to youth at the secondary level is in a direct, realistic manner (although, reality may often seem too cynical itself these days). The task force makes use of serious monologues and straight forward workshops to clearly reveal the various consequences of using drugs and vice-versa, the many advantages of leading a drug-free life.

Our islands are not facing a drug problem as serious as that found in the U.S.A. That is why the Drug Free Task Force is not taking measures as extreme as those in Los Angeles and other major cities. This, however does not imply that it is not concerned or prospective. The task force is taking dire steps towards preparing the youth of the islands to defend themselves in this "war." Approaching the two different youth groups in an appropriate manner for each group is one step towards effectively getting to the youths. It is one step towards winning not only the "war on drugs", but also the war on the evils of a complacent society.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROBBIE (DeANNA) CLARK, YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM, PHOENIX, AZ

The Young Adult Program has helped me in many ways. It has helped me to prepare for future involvements, to go about life's endeavors and to be my own best friend. In becoming an adult there are many things needed to prosper in life. For example, finding and keeping employment, managing money, living independently, and the many modes of transportation to get between here and there.

I feel finding and keeping employment plays an important role in life. Moola, dough, money, however, one cares to call it, it's always important. Without financial success, life would have numerous failures, including living on your own.

Living on your own can be very exciting, yet frightening. What is important to know is that different people need different things. When life becomes stressful, scary, exciting or happy, it is important to remember that you can call on someone within the program in times of need.

The Young Adult Program has supplied me with information on various modes of transportation. These modes are bus, bike, or car. I was also shown how to purchase health and car insurance. In this way, I know where I am going and how I will get there. Knowing you have transportation usually provides a secure mind.

Assessing your strength defines the ability, quality and content within a person. With this realization I am a much better person than I thought. With these three qualities I am able to give my all to my job and know it is my very best. I believe through thick and thin I will always win.

In conclusion, the Young Adult Program has been very effective and beneficial in my life. The program provides information, facts and/or services to all young teens in need. This program is a must for all young teens approaching adulthood.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DERRON BELL, INTERACTIVE TELEVISION SYSTEM, BEAVER, OK

In a small school in the heart of the plains, improved learning conditions are hard to come by. Since budgets are low and costs are high, not enough teachers can be hired to give rural children the different possibilities and variety of classes that many larger schools offer.

One of the most innovative solutions to this deficiency in rural education is the Interactive Television System in Beaver County, Oklahoma. Linking four county schools into one classroom, this program provides several ways in which students can get the most out of a rural school education.

My name is Derron Bell and I attend Beaver High School. The main advantage I see to this program is the greater subject opportunities. In two years of high school, I have taken four classes that I wouldn't ordinarily have been able to take in Beaver. I've taken art from Mr. Robinson in Turpin (26 miles away). I've taken Spanish I and am taking Spanish II from Mrs. Heglin in Forgan (7 miles away). I am taking Advanced Placement English from Mrs. Melton at Beaver (my home site). Without the ITV, it is very unlikely that our school could afford to offer these courses.

Other advantages of the system include getting to know students from other schools, learning how to handle hi-tech equipment, and seeing first-hand how the other schools operate.

Of course, every system does have its drawbacks. The sound system is not flawless, and the person-to-person training, particularly in classes such as art, is limited. However, both sides weighed, I think the positive is definitely the winner here.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF NIKI HARRIS, INTERACTIVE TELEVISION SYSTEM, BALKO, OK

Interactive television is a new concept in rural education. It allows students to take courses that would otherwise be unavailable due to the lack of qualified educators. Through this program, rural schools can assist each other without being forced into consolidation.

What exactly is interactive television? It is television used as a telephone. From my classroom in Balko, OK. I can hear and see my teacher in her classroom in Beaver. She and I are able to not only see each other, but speak to each other as well. I can ask questions or answer them as well as if we were in the same room.

Each classroom has five video cameras and eight television sets strategically placed so that all students can see each other and the teacher can see all students. There are four sets in the front and four sets in the back. In the teachers room, she stands in the front and watches her students from the television set in the back while all students watch her from the sets in the front. The five cameras have three purposes: Three cameras are used frequently and the other two are only back-up cameras. One camera is used for the students. It projects their image to one television. The remaining two are used for the teacher. One shows her as she teaches and the other is used to serve as a chalk board. The teacher does on her desk what she would normally do at a chalk board and then shows it to the class through this camera.

In each of the four classrooms there is a FAX machine. This is a vital piece of equipment in the system. We use the FAX machine to send papers back and forth between the teacher and the students. Sometimes the FAX machine doesn't print well and the papers are difficult to read. If this occurs, we have other ways of sending our papers. We can mail them to each other and we also have a 'Pony Express' system we often use. In small rural areas such as ours we can use our neighbors and friends to transport our necessary papers. For example: A friend in my class lives close to a lady who teaches in Beaver. When our FAX is inconvenient I give things to her to give to her neighbor who then takes the things to school and gives them to my teacher in Beaver. This process also works vice versa.

The ITV system has been a great benefit to the educational system I am involved in. I have been able to take courses that will insure me better preparation for further education.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF CARRIE GROVE, INTERACTIVE TELEVISION, FORGAN, OK

Who would have thought a rural Oklahoma community of 7000 scattered over 50 square miles would come up with the advanced technology of the Interactive Television classroom? The ITV classroom not only benefits high school students but also elementary students and adults in our community. The ITV system connected four rural schools into one interactive classroom atmosphere. Here in rural Oklahoma, schools were not capable of offering classes and programs that are available in the larger school districts. For many years, until the ITV system was introduced, we were at a disadvantage in our curriculum. Now we are able to better meet the curriculum demands of the Oklahoma Department of Education. We use the ITV classroom to improve the aid of learning for every one in Beaver County.

After an extensive amount of time and planning this advanced television classroom was introduced. The amount of money needed to begin a system like this was astounding. Donors and grants helped to make this dream become reality.

Spanish I and II, advanced placement English for juniors and seniors, accounting II, and art I and II are the classes offered to high school students. College courses are also offered every semester through Northwestern Oklahoma State University. Adults and seniors are able to receive college credit without having to spend hours driving the 240 miles round-trip previously required. Elementary students are also offered an elementary Spanish course where they learn the basics of Spanish, like how to say hello "hola", and how are you "como esta usted". A large number of night Community Education Programs are also available.

It takes a lot of time, effort, and preparation for a system like this to work. The school administration, the faculty, and the individual ITV teachers all have to cooperate for this to be a positive situation. Administrators must be willing to deal with the risks normally found in any advanced technology. The faculty must realize the importance of the students receiving all the education needed to compete in a world market. Finally, the ITV teacher must be prepared to teach in a classroom environment whose limitations are dictated by the technology. The benefits of these three working together are limitless to the rural student.

The social benefits of the system include meeting kids from other towns who would otherwise just be rivals on the opposing side of the field or court. In the past kids couldn't go to other towns and mingle. Now we go to other towns and pick up some friends and go chat with the other kids. It's like we are one big happy family made possible through the advances of technology.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KAREN L. PELTON, INTERACTIVE TELEVISION COMMUNICATIONS, TURPIN, OK

Education is our future, and if it were not for the Interactive Television Communications, mine would be limited. The ITV system is a fiber optic network which connects all four high schools in Beaver County. Not only is it an educational tool, but also it helps our community to grow and to unite. By being a member of the sparsely populated Oklahoma Panhandle, I feel that it is an honor to be provided with such an exceptional educational opportunity. The ITV system is a unique teaching tool, helps educate our children, and helps to build the basis of our community.

By the use of an underground system of fiber optic cable, the ITV connects all four high schools in Beaver County: Turpin, Forgan, Beaver, and Balko. In each school, a special classroom is set up for the classes to be taught. Each school is able to communicate with the other by the use of televisions. Classes such as art, advanced placement English, Spanish, and accounting, which were not available to all four schools before are now available. The ITV system allows the students to be able to communicate back and forth as if it were a regular classroom.

By being the first of its kind, the ITV system is to be a very successful program. It enhances the student to want to learn while making learning fun. The ITV system is not only a learning tool, but also it makes education seem not so boring. I am a two year student of the ITV system, and I feel that I have become a more responsible and mature citizen. Students are more aware and alert knowing that three other schools are watching them. The Interactive Television Communications is definitely a great technique to help educate our children.

Each day the ITV system helps to unite our community. Students are able to make friends with students from other schools which they may not have had the chance if it were not for the ITV. Also, superintendents and community leaders from the different towns are able to discuss legislative issues over the ITV instead of having to prepare a meeting. Not only does the ITV system educate our youth, night classes such as sociology and geography are available for adults. The ITV system also brings visitors from other cities and states to visit our program. This gives the students opportunities to meet new and interesting people which they would otherwise not have been able to meet. All these factors help the ITV system to build and to make our community a better place.

Interactive Television Communications is a special and unique system which benefits young and old alike. From one person's dream to a reality, the ITV system has placed Beaver County on the map. I would like to thank everyone who has helped make our educational dream come to life, especially the Oklahoma government. I will always to proud to be part of one of the greatest systems of education in the United States of America, the ITV.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHRIS HOFFMAN LARSON, NIELSEN EMANCIPATION HOME, ONTARIO, OR

Dear Alice Galloway,

I am writing you about the Nielsen Emancipation Home in Ontario, Oregon where I recently completed the program. I am presently legally emancipated and spending the summer with my grandfather in Portland. This fall I will attend Lincoln High School in Lincoln City, Oregon where I will be a senior.

I have been "in care" one way or other for the majority of my life, having been through the adoption process a total of three times. I have been in foster care and group homes, and I feel that the emancipation home changed my life by equipping me and allowing me to take charge of my own life.

The Nielsen Emancipation Home is a small Ma and Pa operation that is home for up to eight young men. While there you learn how to work, how to earn your own way, how to budget money, make menu plans, do your own grocery shopping, your own cooking, your laundry, housekeeping, how to get along in a group setting and they help you get a drivers license. The Nielsen's and their helper Doyle taught us not by babying us or holding our hands, but showing us (if we asked) how things were done and then left us to ourselves. When we goofed they tried not to make a big deal about it; there were always plenty of chances.

While there you are required to go to a once a week meeting to discuss issues and work on problems. The local Mental Health agency provides a worker to assist in this process. The local community also has an Employment Consortium that helped some of us find employment, and they also helped with special educational costs.

I made a lot of friends while I lived at the Nielsen's. Some of the fellows, people I worked with, and went to school with will always be in my memories. I hope to stay in touch with some of them.

The Nielsen's care about each of us but don't expect to take on the role of Mom and Dad. They work hard to set an example of a good marriage and family. They keep their own family life separate while still caring about each of individually.

This program changed my life and I know that it has helped other young men too! When you reach the age of 16 or 17 you begin to want to distance yourself from authority figures. I believe it is important to be able to gain control of your own life and make your own choices. You need to choose not to use drugs and alcohol, you need to be responsible and get car insurance, eat right, take care of your health, and pay your bills. You need to be a good neighbor as well as to be good to yourself, and that is what the Nielsen Emancipation Home gives you the opportunity to learn and experience.

I am thankful for this program and the life changing experience it has given me.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF BOBBI JO GRIFFITHS, FOSTER CARE PROGRAMS, YAMHILL COUNTY, OR

I became an official Mentor Program enrolle on September 13, 1988. I agreed under compliance thinking I would put in my six months and then be free to return to my old life style. Little did I know that God and the Mentor provider family had different plans for me. It was a living situation that I had no idea existed. Here they cared for me as if " I" were important: meeting all of my needs.

Three months into the Mentor Program I experienced culture shock and relapsed. My built-in insecurities, low self-esteem, and issues of abandonment surfaced. During this period, specific interventions were introduced to me which dealt with my relapse behavior. The role modeling of love, trust, and security caused me to see what could be "my" way of life. For the first time in my life I had someone to turn to in times trouble and I was loved-unconditionally. I began to excel in everything!

Upon graduation from the Mentor Program I was accepted as a member of the Mentor/Proctor family. It was following this first hurdle that I attained heights never before thought reachable by me. My first year at Y-C High School I received six academic achievement and improvement awards. My GPA went from .30 to 3.14. Since my accumulated credits for graduation were below the state standard, my school counselor helped me prepare a plan so I could graduate with my class. My foster family tutors me extensively.

I became interested in school activities and played volleyball and softball. I was selected to represent Y-C High School at Oregon's Girl's State spending a week at the University of Oregon learning about our State's Government. While there, I was elected my county's First Citizen-an honor I shall never forget.

My life is on a positive climb-anything is in my reach ! This is made possible by the love and support of my foster family, and "our" community. If the road gets tough I only need to get that reassuring hug and positive direction from my foster-mom. I realize I have had to overcome negative behaviors enabling me to accept love, trust and security-and too, that others have had to gain these very qualities from me. I am now a loving, trustworthy, and law-abiding teenager.

I love my foster family and am secure they will always be there for me in every phase of my life.

Oregon's foster care program works! Without Oregon's CSD intervention I would be just another number in the criminal system.

In the future my goals are to return the care and love I have received by my foster family by securing an adequate education and working in the juvenile justice system. It is my desire to help teens in trouble by sharing with them the same love and guidance my foster family has provided me in both my home and work place.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF WICK WARDEN, BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA, RUSTON, LA

During the eight years I have been involved in the Boy Scouts of America, I have learned that the goal of Scouting is to provide an opportunity for young men and women to grow and mature in an atmosphere that supports the fundamental belief that any individual can achieve his or her life goals with planning and reaching for those goals.

Scounting teaches us the Scout Law which states that a Scout is Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave, Clean, and Reverent. By Scouting promoting and encouraging youth to live by these ideals just imagine the greatness of a generation of Americans who could describe themselves with these qualities.

Scouting also addresses what we call the " 5 Unacceptables" in society. First, POVERTY: Scouting is battling poverty by striving to break the poverty chain. Kids from impoverished families are brought into Scout Troops and are able experience a program which builds self-confidence and encourages education and broadening of horizons through the Merit Badge program. Thus, Scouting strives to create citizens with the ability and desire to break the chain of poverty. Second, HUNGER: Through Scoutings National Good Turn operation called "Scouting for Food" Scouts nation wide distribute food bags which are gathered the following week and the food is then distributed to the local Community Food Banks or other local organizations which see that the food is made available to the needy families of the area. Third, ILLITERACY: Scouting addresses this unacceptible by promoting numerous book programs and teaching all Scouts that education is important and reading is necessary. Fourth, CHILD ABUSE: Scouting has a program which teaches its volunteers and the Scout and his parents the signs of child abuse and what procedures are to be taken if abuse is suspected. The new BOY SCOUT HANDBOOK contains an insert about child abuse for the Scout and his parents. Fifth, DRUGS: Scouting's program of "Drugs a Deadly Game" adresses the final unacceptable by distributing brouchures, posters, and other media to the Scouts, their families, and schools striving to educate everyone about the dangers of Drug use.

Finally, I would like to share an experience we had in our Scout Troop. A young boy with Spina-Bifda joined our Troop with no goal other than making some new friends. Initially he was very shy and quiet. His parents had requested that we treat him as any other member of the Troop, which we did. After a few weeks he began to open up and even decided he would attend a week long Summer Camp. Since David's parents were in a financial bind due to his medical condition, it was necessary for him to sell Scout Exoc tickets to earn the money he would need to go to Camp. Not only did he sell enough tickets to pay his Camp fee he sold the second largest number of tickets sold in our District and won a radio as his prize. At Summer Camp David decided he wanted to learn how to swim. Although paralyzed from the waist down he was determined to earn the Swimming Skill Award. With additional help from the Camp staff and sheer determination on David's part he was able to swim 75 yards in a strong forward stroke, swim 25 yards in a backstroke, and float for one minute. David was thrilled with his achievement. Since that time David has become an avid camper and now is a more outgoing and confident member of our Troop. I want to say that all of our Troop have learned and grown because of David being a part of our Troop. He has shown us that desire and persistance are more important than the physical limitations we may feel we possess.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL ANGAIAK, NATURAL HELPERS PROGRAM, ALASKA

The Natural Helpers program in the State of Alaska is a program that is giving young people the ability to help each other survive through life's struggles. Natural Helpers are high school age students who are trained in listening and referral skills to serve as informal peer counselors in their respective schools. This is not to say they give advice to students who approach them with a problem, but rather Natural Helpers give possible options to help a fellow student on their way to a resolution. If a Natural Helper feels that a situation is too difficult to deal with at any time, they have access to numerous professional counseling groups from which they may seek assistance or to which an individual may be referred.

The Natural Helpers program was first brought to Alaska only a few short years ago in 1986. It began with the realization that when students are faced with every day problems, the majority do not turn to their parents, teachers, or school counselors for help and guidance, but more often to their friends and the fellow students with whom they feel most comfortable. Thus, what would be more logical than giving students the

listening skills and ability to help each other in dealing with common problems? But, it would be impossible to train an entire school with the skills necessary to become an effective helper, so there would need to be some way of training only those who could reach out to aid most individuals. Therefore, students within each school were polled and asked to list those with whom they felt most comfortable speaking. Then, so that students were not picked on a popularity basis, such as sometimes happens in other polls like homecoming royalty or student council elections, students were chosen to represent the various cliques within the school. This act involved distinguishing which student was part of the "jock" clique, the "nerd" clique and every group in between. Thus, students were selected to be trained as Natural Helpers by vote of their particular social group. This system proved to be the best way to reach the entire student body of each school and give the widest variety of students the opportunity to become part of the Natural Helpers group.

The main training for those who wish to represent their school as Natural Helpers takes place over a single intense, emotional weekend. Those who participate are required to remain at the designated training sight, which is often their school, for the entire weekend. This means eating, sleeping, and taking part in every activity with the entire group.

These standards are required in hopes of unifying the group as best as possible. The start of the weekend involves group activities that help everyone in introducing and meeting each other. In the beginning, the people involved in the weekend training session are often in an awkward situation for they are with people they see at school but have never truly spoken with before because the cliques and social groups of high schools are often discriminatory. After these social boundaries are broken down, the students are at a comfort level with one another where nothing will inhibit their learning together. Then, throughout the course of the weekend, each student participates in activities and workshops that increase their listening skills, make them aware of warning signs that may be noticed in students with serious problems, teach them how to and to whom to refer individuals when they are having trouble dealing with a student. Most importantly, they learn their own limits as Natural Helpers. On the last night of the weekend session, an activity simply called "Sharing" gives each person the chance to speak and reveal personal things that they are willing to let go of and share with everyone in the group with the assurance that whatever is said in the group stays in the group. This "Sharing" is a very emotional experience and truly bonds each individual together and gives the Natural Helpers the strength to become

an effective helping group. After the training weekend, the Natural Helpers may agree to designate weekly or bi-weekly meeting times where other learning workshops and activities may occur or where students have a chance to explain a problem that was brought before them and seek help in dealing with it themselves.

By training students to become Natural Helpers, the entire student body of a school benefits. Increasingly productive results have occurred ever since the group was first introduced in Alaska. Teen suicides have been prevented, individuals have gone on to seek help for drug and alcohol problems, and numerous other positive changes have occurred within schools. With each school year, new Natural Helpers are trained and each school is provided with more individuals who know how to approach student problems. The program has grown tremendously in the few years that it has been in effect, going from being used primarily in Alaska's larger cities such as Fairbanks and Anchorage to where a Natural Helper may even be found in the state's smallest villages. Many junior high schools are now starting up Natural Helper programs and there is a textbook being written primarily for this group including the training of Natural Helpers. Natural Helpers has proven itself an effective program in the state of Alaska and if implemented in those states in the union that do not yet have an equivalent program, the youth of today will be far more ready to handle the problems and struggles that face them throughout life.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WINTERLUDE PATTERSON, AYI, JUNEAU, AL

My name is Winterlude Patterson--I go by "Kayla". I am sixteen years old and a junior in High School. I am an AYI kid. I have been in AYI for two years.

I I became an AYI ked when I got out of my second treatment center. At first we really didn't have too much communication on my part. They appointed a lady in charge of me to take me to socially acceptable recreational activities. Her name was Isabel. Isabel brought me to all my appointments and helped me get an ID card and was my advocate.

AYI has funded my braces and my work. They have made sure my foster parent has enough time to run her business out of town with respite care workers. They have helped me even travel.

AYI has also put money into my work. I work at Lakeside Recovery Center, the drug alchohol treatment center I went to two years ago. I now have nineteen months of sobriety.

AYI gave me a person to take me on socially acceptable recreational activities. This person helped me cash my first paycheck and get my identification card. She was also moral support during stressful times.

All in all, AYI has been a good program for me. This year I got to travel three times because of AYI money. I got the support I need to stay sober and some incentive. I didn't just have this stuf given to me because I sat there. I had to stay sober and be acceptable and go to school. In other words I had to work really hard to get these things.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JEFF McKECHNIE, EXPLORER POST NO. 55, PALMER, AL

The Explorer Post #55 is a youth organization sponsored by the Alaska State Troopers. The organization gives teens from ages fifteen through twenty an opportunity to obtain insights of just how law enforcement works effectively. Exploring gives its members hands-on experience working with the officers in many fields. Explorers work on "Search and Rescue," crime prevention programs such as "Crimestoppers," and the "Here's Looking At You 2000" program. This program involves Explorers visiting the elementary and Jr. high schools and teaching refusal skills to elementary school students to prevent drug and alcohol abuse.

This year, Explorer Post #55 had the opportunity to compete in Lake Tahoe, Nevada. Explorers competed and placed third in Hostage Negotiations and various other police skills. The FBI agent who judged the contest called it "The closest competition ever." He also said we showed superior skills.

This program is a great organization for young adults who have an interest in any law enforcement field or to get a better understanding of life as a law enforcement officer. It is a program that can increase a participant's practical knowledge of the law and the justice system. It also gives young adults a sense of responsibility within themselves, the Post, and their advisor.

The program works because of the dedication and motivation of each Explorer in the Post and the Post Advisor. We are given many responsibilities and are expected to carry them out in a professional manner. We learn to respect each other and are always willing to volunteer our help within the Post and throughout our community.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GAIL FILES, DYS PROGRAMS, CAPE GIRARDEAU, MO

August 8, 1990

Cape Girardeau, MO

Dear Governor Ashcroft:

I am writing you this letter to let you know about our DYS programs in Cape Girardeau. I am seventeen years old and I live in a foster home with Irene and Charles Bostic. Fostercare is a family that takes in kids and help them in a family situation, just like they were their own kikds. They take us to church and supply us with support and nurturing. They try to fill our needs the best way they feel possible. If it wasn't for the Bostic's, I wouldn't have very much.

I became involved with Division of Youth Services because of my childhood problems and family issues. As a result of this I became involved in lots of problems and began to run away from home.

When I first came to Cape Girardeau, I was put in the new Proctor Care program. This is when a Criminal Justice major volunteers to take a child just getting out of a DYS facility and helps them out by helping them find a job, caring for them, letting them know that someone does care. My family and I did not get along very well, so the Division of Youth Services and SEMO Unviversity helped me out. I also have a tracker, or as they are really called, an Intensive Case Monitor. To let you know more about our ICM program, this is when a Criminal Justice major helps a proctor child or one who has gotten out of a facility, to find a job, or just do fun things, like little sisters and big sisters would do. My ICM helps me look for jobs and talks to me about my problems. She helps me out a lot. I am glad that people like her in the Proctor Care and ICM programs are here to help us in our time of need. We in the Proctor Care and ICM program are the fortunate ones to have people like the ones here in Cape Girardeau with DYS and the unviversity, they help us out a lot.

Now to let you know more about our school at SEMO Community Treatment Center's Day Treatment, it is used for several different things. One thing is for students that got suspended from school or they dropped out. Our school gives them a chance to get their credits back. It's a real big help for the students. When they go there and see all the people that are there to help them, they become a lot more confident in themselves and try harder, then they can apply what they learn at Day Treatment. Another reason for Day Treatment is for students like myself studying for their GED. The GED students go two hours every day, to help them pass their GED exam. It has helped me out a lot. I should be ready fairly soon to take it thanks to the teachers at Day Treatment. Another reason it used is for the residential education program for the young men at the group homes. It helps them for when they get out of the group homes and want to get back into school, they'll still have their credits. The young men like it very much and use it to their best advantage. The Day Treatment is a big help for all of us.

Last but not least, we have our Aftercare counselors, secretaries and the head regional workers. Thanks to these people, we kids get our clothing and other nice things. They make sure that we have the right kind of materials for school, they make sure that we get to the doctor when we need to. It's caring people like them that make us have our heads higher about ourselves, and also help us be confident about many things.

In closing, I would like to say God bless you for all the good things you have done for the state of Missouri. My area of advocacy is in the area of children's programs, and in particular, sexual abuse survivors programs.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TINA COFFERT, FUTURE HOMEMAKERS OF AMERICA, RAVENWOOD, MO

Life in the United States of America is a series of cause and effect relationships, related to every aspect of a citizen's life. Some of the greatest, sometimes most devastating of those causes, affect the youth of our country.

My childhood years were spent with an alcoholic parent. I can recall every incident as if it were yesterday. Although my family's situation was not as critical as others, to me, it was the most painful thing I had ever endured.

As a seventh grader, my home economics education teacher/Future Homemakers of America advisor observed my low self-esteem, but was also aware of the potential for development. She encouraged me to become an active member in Future Homemakers of America and indeed I did. I have since participated in local to national activities. I have attended four regional meetings, five state leadership conferences, three nationally sponsored cluster meetings, and four national leadership meetings.

Through attending workshops and listening to speakers I have developed my self-confidence, self-esteem, and leadership skills. Being a member has done so much for me, that today I am the national president of Future Homemakers of America and served as state president last year.

Through my travels and experiences, I have seen and heard about the many projects taking place in home economics classes and Future Homemakers of America chapters. I have seen communities become aware of such issues as AIDS, birth defects, drinking and driving, the environment, teenage pregnancy, and peer pressure. I have seen my friend Tara*, who was sexually abused until put into a foster home, stand before several audiences and give an illustrated talk. I have observed chapters provide regularly scheduled assemblies for elementary students on issues such as telephone safety, prescribed medicine safety, and fire safety. Chapters also develop activities for elementary students during county fairs or for preteen and junior high age students on weekends. Our chapter activities are directly related to the family, the central focus of home economics education and Future Homemakers of Ameica.

As teenagers, we are a vital role model for young children and our peers. I firmly believe that if children have a positive environment in which truth, love, security, and faith are realities, not dreams, then many would not resort to violence, drugs, or suicide as an answer.

I have seen myself become concerned about education, so concerned that I would like to become a home economics educator and later pursue a career with the United States Department of Education.

Knowledge is power and America's youth need more of it. Education begins at home and it is more than math, English, science, and history. Education is becoming functional and successful in an ever changing world full of causes and effects.

*This name has been changed.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF JIM MASSEY, MARKETING EDUCATION PROGRAM, MISSOURI

The Marketing Education program allows high school students to learn usable skills in marketing, entrepreneurship, and management. The classroom curriculum includes the study of economics, market operations, selling, human relations skills and the various aspects of international marketing.

An integral part of Marketing Education is the vocational student organization, DECA. DECA is a club which affords students the opportunity to demonstrate marketing and management skills acquired through their Marketing Education program in activities such as competition, career development conferences, and career opportunities available through cooperative programs with businesses.

The function and advantages of DECA are best illustrated by our emblem the diamond which has four points of importance. The points consist of vocational understanding, social intelligence, civic consciousness, and leadership development.

DECA provides its members with vocational understanding. This affords students the opportunity of actual marketing job experience as well as encouraging students to further their education by awarding scholarships in the areas of marketing and management.

Social intelligence is an area which allows students to meet with a wide variety of students from different social and cultural backgrounds. Students are allowed to compete or share with their peers ideas about what they have learned in marketing education.

Civic consciousness is the point on the diamond which involves students contributing their time and effort to local community activities to show support for the betterment of society as a whole. The participation in an activity for the Muscular Dystrophy Association, and conducting a canned food drive for local needy at Christmas illustrate the support DECA members return to their community.

Leadership development is the last point of the DECA Diamond. DECA affords the opportunity to train, develop, and practice actual leadership skills on a local, district, state and national level. Students organize, and conduct leadership activities to better prepare them for holding offices and serving on activity committees in their local chapters, at district functions and on the national and state levels of leadership positions.

The package on the center of the DECA Diamond stands for a job well done! Using the concepts of four points of the diamond, and much perseverance, a Marketing Education student involved in DECA can achieve much success and obtain all of their personal goals.

The emphasis on a job well done is very important to both marketing and DECA marketing and DECA. The DECA tag line shows the importance of achieving those goals, reading as follows: "Developing Future Leaders in Marketing and Management."

PREPARED STATEMENT OF REEBINDER (REE) FLOWERS, INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM, RICHLAND, MO

The Independent Living Program is an opportunity for teenagers in foster care to acquire basic survival skills. Many teenagers growing up in foster care do not have the opportunity to witness a consistent set of adult behaviors. The Independent Living Program exists to help these teens make a smooth transition from their home environment to the adult world of responsibilities.

The Independent Living Program is the result of a 1985 study done in New York. The statistics revealed that fifty percent of New York City's homeless were former foster care dependents. These individuals were released from agency care without the necessary skills they needed, thus becoming a burden to their community.

Independent Living group skills training meets on a weekly basis for six to twelve months. Youth who elect to join the program are paid for their attendance, participation, and completion of homework. This serves as an incentive for the youths to complete the course. I feel the incentives are important because a lot of teens lack the maturity to understand the extreme importance of this class. Daily living skills covered include decision making and communication, legal issues, values, dealing with stress and peer pressure, health, personal hygiene, transportation, housing, safety skills, money management, and educational planning.

The Independent Living Program also provides the opportunity for youth to participate in seminars and field trips and to listen to speakers from the community. The seminars are usually based on self-esteem. The underlying message is that good self-esteem leads to good choices in life. Field trips are usually to places in the community, such as banks, grocery stores, apartments, or car dealerships. One trip was to the state capitol for Child Advocacy Day. From this experience we learned how other people outside the Division of Family Services are working to help us and protect our rights. The program speakers are people from the community who specialize in public safety, drug and alcohol abuse, or their particular area of expertise. The program also utilizes former foster care youth who are living on their own successfully. All of these people are brought into the program to teach, inspire and encourage the foster care teens.

As a future productive citizen, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the people who have made the Independent Living Program available. We are all created equal, but because of misfortunes in life some people are given road blocks to overcome. I believe that through the benefits of this program, I have an equal opportunity to achieve, conquer, and excel in my endeavor to become a successful human being who will be able to contribute to society and maybe in some way return the gift to others that has been given to me.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF GREG FOSTER, EXPLORER POST 108, BSA, BROOKWOOD, AL

I represent Explorer Post 108 of the Black Warrior Council-Boy Scouts of America. Our Council serves 12 West Alabama Counties. Post 108 is sponsored by Jim Walter Resources, Mining Division in Brookwood, [redacted].

I became a member of Post 108 as soon as I was old enough to join. The Exploring program gives boys and girls 14 through 21 years old the chance to learn about a variety of careers first hand. But that's not all. It's the best way I know for teenagers to have fun and learn at the same time.

Most of our career training comes from hands-on experiences. We've learned everything from welding to forensic science. Our education doesn't stop with careers though. Last year the Captain of the West Alabama Narcotics Squad gave us a two hour seminar on drug abuse. He let us watch videos of actual undercover busts in our own community. The videos and watching him demonstrate what it's like to be arrested, complete with handcuffing and searching some of our own Explorer members, really left an impression.

One of our most "interesting" meetings was on sex education. The Student Health Director from the University of Alabama was our speaker. It was a chance to get the correct answers for all those embarrassing questions every teenager has.

Being only a few minutes away from the University of Alabama gives us an unique opportunity most kids around here can only dream of. I'm talking about attending college sports events. Every year we have a baseball and basketball game honoring Explorers and can attend at no charge. But the best part is during football season. We get to usher every home game and receive free admission in exchange for our services. With all the home games a sell out, it's quite a treat.

Service projects are another part of Exploring that allows us to give something back to our community. A few of the projects we help with are Scouting for Food, a program that collects canned goods for the needy every November, and the March of Dimes WalkAmerica held every May.

After serving as Vice President and now as President of our Post, I can guarantee you Exploring is one of the best youth programs anywhere. Lock-ins, volleyball, rappelling and our annual snow skiing trip to Gatlinburg, Tennessee are the fun parts of Exploring. But the parts that will stay with me the rest of my life are the friends I've made, learning how to handle responsibilities; and most of all, knowing there are people who care enough about the youth of this country to provide us with such an excellent program as Exploring.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ELLERY COOK, YOUTH AND GOVERNMENT PROGRAM, MONTGOMERY, AL

A young collegiate telephoned one afternoon to inform me that she was spending her summer working for the State Health Department of Alabama. She was asked to complete an independent study on infant mortality in the state. As we talked she was excited to tell me that this golden opportunity presented itself due to her prior involvement in the Youth and Government program. Her senior legislative bill was extensively researched and written on infant mortality, and upon reading her bill the Health Board offered her the job. As Alabama's acting youth governor, I was elated to hear how this program continues to serve young people even after graduation.

Being involved with the program for the past two years I am acutely aware of how unique this program is in aiding Alabama youth. By performing model legislative and judicial branches, young persons gain a "hands-on" understanding of what the political, debating process is all about. In late February teams from across the state compete in a judicial competition. The teams--either prosecution or defense-- present their case in front of a jury and one of seven youth judges. The rounds are held in a county courthouse with the final trial held in the federal courthouse in Montgomery. With the oak paneled walls and the intimidating judge's bench, the experience is one never to be forgotten. In April participants enjoy a four day legislative session held in the statehouse chambers. All state officers are elected prior to the event and perform their duties throughout the weekend. Each representative or senator researches and presents a bill he has previously prepared. Committee hearings are conducted and a calendar is formed in rules committee which dictates the flow of bills on the chamber floor. An interesting aspect is that even after intense, argumentative debate the young people still walk out of chambers as close friends.

I have heard of and have attended other model government programs, but I believe this program is special because of the amount of planning the youth put into it. From the end of September until the weekend in April, young people attend planning retreats and meetings in order to discuss and vote on every change or rule entered into the program. From districts to curfew to dress code, the rules are the youths' decisions. As youth governor I act as chairperson of these retreats and break all ties on voting issues.

This YMCA sponsored program is original in that it was designed by youth forty-two years ago and remains a "youth-run" event today. The program adheres to all state government ideas in its format including parliamentary procedure while it motivates young people to become more involved in issues facing the state of Alabama. From taxes to environmental landfills to a state lottery, young people present their ideas. While practicing public speaking youth also learn to appreciate another perspective or perhaps a completely different view. No matter what the outcome in the chambers or in court, highschool students from Huntsville to Mobile grow and share in their knowledge of the state while learning the value of working together to solve the problems of today.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF W. KEVIN BRINKLEY, PEOPLE TO PEOPLE PROGRAM, BIRMINGHAM, AL

Since its inception in 1956 by President Eisenhower, the People to People Organization has worked to strengthen cultural ties with other countries through the exchange of citizens in various fields. One of its divisions, the Student Ambassador Program, allows young Americans to visit foreign countries as representatives.

During my junior year in high school I was chosen as an ambassador after a thorough selection process. In June, 1990, I attended a three day orientation which presented lectures from noted authorities on Russian culture and travel. This increased my enthusiasm while I met my thirty-one delegation members and three leaders, and it prepared me for an incredible journey as a member of Alabama's "C" delegation.

My first glimpse of the Soviet Union came as we arrived in Moscow on July 3, 1990. Immediately after leaving the plane we were met by customs, the first of many long lines to come. Here long lines are a way of life, the reflection of a failing economy. Citizens must wait for hours each day to obtain basic necessities, even when there are no shortages.

Moscow represents the militarized Russia that my friends and I imagined. Army trucks rumbled down wide streets, passing crowded sidewalks. The government seemed to be everywhere, even in the colossal sports arena we toured, where athletes are selected at a young age and trained under the government's watchful eye. Still, to stand at locations, such as Red Square, which I had only seen before on newscasts and in textbooks, profoundly changed the way I will view current events and world history. Here we observed the Fourth of July with our own small service thousands of miles away from the country celebrating its freedom. Our home in America was never so far away or dear to our hearts.

In the rolling hills and green countryside of Kiev we toured beautiful Roman Orthodox cathedrals whose grandeur spoke of a long-gone era of Russian history. Yet modern times have left their mark on these as well; churches of gilded domes and soaring, vaulted ceilings have been relegated to the status of museums. Still, their elderly caretakers guard them with reverence and demand silence and respect from the passing tourists.

In the factory we visited, in Rostov-on-Don, we watched men and women construct large machinery for agriculture. Above their heads, painted on a far wall, the ubiquitous Lenin reminded them to remember that "industry and agriculture are our main goals". To replace the personal incentive that drives American excellence, the Soviet government places Communist propaganda wherever possible to rally the morale of workers. Their situation remains grim, however, as in the artificial fur factory where workers gained early retirement due to diseases caused by the chemicals they use.

Attached to each factory was a day-care building, where the children of employees are kept. This school often becomes the child's home, where he eats and sleeps under the supervision of grandmotherly teachers. To us it seemed like a tranquil refuge, deceivingly safe in comparison to the oppressive society that child would soon come to know. How could we help but feel as we looked into the innocent faces of each boy and girl that they too deserved to know the freedom with which we are blessed?

The People to People Program has been a success because of its dedicated leadership, carefully selected ambassadors and well structured activities. My journey to the Soviet Union has changed me as a person and an American citizen. No longer shall I take for granted the privileges of a country founded upon the concept of the dignity of its individuals.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PAMELA COLSTON, YOUNG MOTHERS' PROGRAM, BIRMINGHAM, AL

Teenage pregnancy is one of the national issues that is presently confronting our state. Alabama ranks third highest in the nation in teenage pregnancies. To address the overwhelming needs of the pregnant teenager, the Young Mothers' Program at Ensley High School was developed by the Birmingham Board of Education. Its goals are to: provide a comprehensive academic environment for the pregnant teenager; to decrease infant mortality; to strengthen parenting skills; to provide continuity of prenatal care and emergency intervention; to provide vocational skills; to improve decision-making skills; and to decrease school dropout. Personally, it has helped to insure an excellent outcome to my pregnancy in addition to providing a way for me to continue in school and enhance my future outlook. When I became pregnant at age 16, I felt that my future had been severely handicapped. The Young Mothers' Program changed my thinking, and subsequently my life.

My baby was due to be born on February 3, 1990. But on December 3, my water broke during school. Mrs. Johnson, the program's obstetric nurse, rushed me to the hospital in an attempt to delay my labor long enough for the baby's lungs to fully develop. On December 9, my 3 1/2 pound baby girl, Shaniqua, was born. She was in Intensive Care for two weeks and came home the day before Christmas. Mrs. Johnson was literally a life-saver. Without her swift intervention, Shaniqua would have been among Alabama's infant mortality statistics - which are among the highest in the nation. Mrs. Johnson has since become my "school mom" and God-Mother to my daughter.

During the lengthy stay at home with my premature infant, the Young Mothers' Program provided my school work so that I might continue my education. When I returned to school, I was allowed to make up any missed work and continued to maintain an A-B average. The faculty members of the Young Mothers' Program established a close relationship with me during and following my pregnancy. They encouraged me to stay in school and offered me the flexibility I needed to manage this very difficult situation.

As a component of the Young Mothers' Program, an Infant Care Center is maintained for the use of students who would have to drop out of school for lack of child care. They accepted my daughter when her weight reached 5 pounds. My courses were scheduled so that I spent my study/lunch and Occupational Child Care periods in the nursery with Shaniqua. Mrs. Hall, Director of the Infant Care Center, provided stimulating infant activities so that her early start in life would be put to best advantage.

In an effort to move me along a career path, Ms McDonald, the Coordinator for the Young Mothers' Program, worked with me in developing computer skills. Based on this experience in designing data base systems, I was recently hired by the Mayor's office to work with the Executive High School Internship Program. My plans are to major in International Business upon completion of high school.

As a senior at Ensley High School, my anticipation of graduation in June is of special significance to me. As a parenting teenager, my once-bleak future is now full of possibilities because of the Young Mothers' Program. My daughter will have graduated too, in a sense, from a fragile beginning to healthy toddlerhood.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF FARRI K. MORTON, CULLMAN COUNTY 4-H CLUBS, ALABAMA

Each of us has the power to choose. We can choose to gain knowledge or to avoid learning. We can run with the crowd or stand above it. We can choose right over wrong. We can choose to include or exclude others by being self-centered or self-less. We can develop new skills and talents or ignore them. We can build a life full of loving and sharing with family and friends or we can lead a life of quiet desperation of which Thoreau writes. We can be positive or negative. We can achieve or we can fail.

4-H is a positive influence on nearly 4.5 million of our nation's youth. Four-H not only asks young people like myself to "make the best better", it gives us guidance and support to reach our goals.

One teen 4-H'er campaigns to begin a recycling program in his community. Another makes a personal commitment to the war on substance abuse by organizing a "hot-line" crisis intervention program. And another is the junior leader of several clubs of younger 4-H'ers. She uses the skills and knowledge she acquired by participating in 4-H to help these youngsters learn to make the proper choices in their lives. Yet another 4-H'er simply uses the skills she learned to help her family by having a safe household, preparing nutritious foods, and is able to make simple repairs on electrical items.

These young people are part of the nation's largest and most dynamic informal youth education program. They are the heart of 4-H. For millions of youth across the country -- from the farm, from the city and in between, 4-H is the means of learning practical skills in hundreds of projects. But more importantly, they are developing attitudes and habits that help them meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Four-H is conducted by the Cooperative Extension Service of the Land-Grant Universities and the U. S. Department of Agriculture. This strong educational base is extended to the young people through a corps of more than 630,000 volunteer 4-H leaders who share their time and talents to help 4-H'ers "learn by doing".

Four-H has been a positive influence on my life for the past eight years. I have learned to develop my head, heart, hands and health; first through learning basic life skills and now through sharing my knowledge with others. I think that 4-H has helped me to make the right choices in life and I'm glad I chose 4-H.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF NATHAN T. DUNN, MAINE HANDICAPPED SKI PROGRAM, SACO, ME

My name is Nathan Trevor Dunn. I am a thirteen year old, eighth grade student at Saco Middle School in Maine. I was in the Maine Handicapped Ski Program that is at Sunday River Ski Resort in Bethel, Maine. I was in the Handicapped Ski Program because of my cerebal palsy. That means that the right side of me doesn't work as well it should.

The Maine Handicapped Ski Program is the only one of its kind in the state of Maine. When I first started the program there were only twenty-five or so kids involved. Now there are over two hundred. They've even expanded into having their own building.

I liked the Handicapped Ski Program because it helps handicapped children know that they can do just as much as people who are not handicapped. There is one-on-one instruction for each person in the program. By having one-on-one instruction, I could move at my own speed. The instructors were always nice and kind and treated me like a normal person. And the instructors in the program use a variety of devices - like poles that attach to the persons arms, poles with skis on the ends of them, blind skier signs, chains on the ends of the skis to hold the tips together, etc. - to help the handicapped skier to ski with or without poles. Not to mention that because of the program the whole thing is free.

I think that the Maine Handicapped Ski Program helped me because it helped me learn how to ski and made me feel like I could do anything that anyone else could. My favorite part about skiing was speeding down the slopes, and the sense of control it gave me. I really enjoy speeding along and leaving my parents way behind, especially my mom.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CORY MULLIS, JOY HOWE PROGRAM, COLUMBUS, IN

My name is Cory Mullis, age 16, and I am a student at the Joy Howe Program in Columbus, Indiana. Columbus is basically a blue collar community, and our program is fortunate to receive the support of Cummins Engine Foundation, Irwin-Sweeney-Miller Foundation, Arvin Foundation, The Heritage Fund, and many other very fine local foundations. The Joy Howe Program was founded in 1983 by the Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation, in conjunction with Quinco Consulting Center. Bill Barton, our director, had been working with Quinco (a community mental health center), and he wanted to develop a safe place to address the needs of 'high risk' students who were not able to experience success in a regular school setting. I am one of these students, and Joy Howe has become that safe place.

I came to Joy Howe two years ago from a local high school. I was having problems - fighting, skipping classes, not doing my work, etc. At Joy Howe, I feel that the smaller class size, and more individualized attention, has helped me to get closer to teachers, showing me that someone does care about what is going on inside me. Also, the staff at Joy Howe has helped me to feel the self-esteem that I was lacking. They have also aided me in finding meaningful part-time employment; and through such innovative programs as the Student Credit Coop, I have been able to borrow money to buy a dirt bike. I have already paid back my loan, and I now have a good credit rating.

Last year the Joy Howe Program was selected by Bill Moyers to be the focus of a PBS television documentary (airing in January, 1991). The positive attention shown to us by Mr. Moyers, his assistants, and the camera crew did much to help us students to feel better about ourselves.

I am enclosing a brochure about our program, and I want to thank you for inviting me to the National Day of the Child celebration.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF JACOB A. EISBART, MAGNET PROGRAM, FORT WAYNE, IN

In the past three years. I have had an opportunity to be a part of an exciting educational experience - the Magnet Program. This program has given me a chance to experience education at its finest along with an abundance of multi-cultural and multi-ethnic exposure. It prepared me and my classmates for high school as well as the road beyond.

At Memorial Park each student was viewed as an individual and not a number. Our teachers encouraged us to be ourselves and achieve all that we were capable of achieving. We were encouraged to stretch; to reach beyond what we could do, to do even that which we might only dream of doing.

My magnet school experience was based on the idea that young people from different backgrounds could work, play and learn from each other. That we could share our uniquenesses and respect our differences. We were not forced into any single mold but rather encouraged to create our own presence.

In academics, we were treated as individuals as well. Our teachers took the time to work with each of us; to develop ourselves; to feel good about ourselves and what we accomplished. Our school consistently had not only the top actors, musicians and speakers in the community but also excelled in science, math and social studies.

The magnet experience is succeeding beyond our wildest hopes. It has served as a model to encourage excellence throughout the community. And it has prepared me well for the excitement and challenge of high school. I will never forget Memorial Park.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ORION MEYER, UNITED ACTION FOR YOUTH, IOWA CITY, IA

United Action for Youth is a non-profit organization catering to the needs of local youth, no matter the youth's social, economical, or racial background. It allows a place for youth to be themselves in a very relaxed atmosphere. This is important to all adolescents because it allows for self realization. United Action for Youth accomplishes this in a variety of ways.

The prevention side of UAY, known as Synthesis, operates on the basis that "saying 'No'" is okay, but teens must be given something to say "YES" to. In meeting this philosophy Synthesis provides several activities. The first is a sound/recording studio. It contains drums, guitars, synthesizers, a piano and other equipment for aspiring as well as accomplished youth musicians. "The Dating Cellos" is an improvisational drama troupe that tours local schools, churches and is also involved in area youth conferences. It also provides youth involved with UAY to be exposed to acting, a chance they might not otherwise receive. Other activities are an outdoor recreation group, an art and poetry magazine (compiled and written by teens), super 8 animation and several other activities.

Anther aspect of UAY is the counseling/outreach program. This provides services to those teens who require counseling as well as to their families, an on-call counselor 24 hours a day, and a newly developed "teen rap line" allowing for teens to communicate with other teens.

All of these programs are readily accessible to teens and are developed with them in mind. The staff are willing to listen, treat youth as an equal (they do not talk down) to them, and are willing to implement any suggestions or input given by the teens they serve. United Action for Youth is an all around positive experience for all involved.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CARRIE ALICE JOHNSON, BLANDING, UT

My name is Carrie Alice Johnson, a Navajo from the Utah portion of the Navajo Reservation. I am fifteen years old. I am presently attending San Juan High School here in Blanding. I am in the tenth grade. I am presently involved in a pageant for the title of "Miss Indian San Juan". Other activities I am involved in are the Indian Club where I am a reporter; the Journalism Club where I am the feature reporter; and the San Juan High School Band where I play the flute. I have been in the Band for the past five years. This past summer I attended the Summer Youth Experience Program at the College of Eastern Utah - San Juan Center here in Blanding. My major studies included: Math, History, Science and Keyboarding. I thoroughly enjoyed my summer classes there. I hope to return there next year. My favorite subject is English. I love to write poems and short stories.

My future goals include completing high school and continuing my higher education at Utah Valley Community College in Provo to begin studying psychologyI plan to pursue a career in Corporate Law.

I come from a family of four. I have two sisters: Kristi who is fourteen years old and is attending San Juan High School where she is in the ninth grade; Lynn, my oldest sister is eighteen years old and attends Dixie College in St. George, Utah. I live with my mother and sisters in Blanding. My father was killed in an automobile accident in October, 1978. I was only three years old at the time. Both of my parents were educated and have graduated from the University of Utah. My father had a Masters in Social Work. My mother is working towards completing her Masters in Educational Psychology from the University of Utah.

I am a descendent from the Maryboy-Whitehorse family. In Navajo, I have two major clans--one from my maternal grandparents and the second from my paternal grandparents. I have lots of cousins, aunts, uncles, and grandparents, etc. I am very proud of my heritage and my "huge" family.

I would like to express my appreciation for being nominated and selected to represent my school and our School District.

Thank you once again.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHRISTINA TORRES, SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM, DENVER, CO

As the representative of the Summer Youth Program, I feel it shows and offers many good things to us as kids. It gives us a chance to work anywhere, in a hospital or daycare to a business office, learning many different types of jobs. It shows us many kinds of jobs we may like to have in the future and gives us good experience for that particular job.

In my experience of the program, I learned many things about the business world. I answered phones, did word processing, used the fax machine and a copy machine,along with many other things. It showed me what the business world is like. Giving me good experience for future jobs I may have.

Now I realize how important it is to take full advantage of all classes, and opportunities that are available to me in high school. I have learned not to take the easy classes, just to get a good grade or just to get out of school. Instead, a student should take classes to prepare themselves for a successful and fulfilling future.

Through the program we have sponsors, who help us if we mess up. They give us all the help we need, giving us second chances, so we learn what we can't do in the real world.

The program keeps us busy during the summer, giving us good jobs, a chance to learn something, instead of the ordinary mowing lawns or baby sitting jobs, along with the chance to earn money. "It keeps us out of trouble in the summer", said one of the girls I spoke with. "It gave us a lot of responsibility", said another guy I talked with. We learn to be responsible for going to work every day and getting our jobs done.

While getting ideas to write this paper, I spoke with some of the other kids in the program to see how they felt. All the kids I spoke with felt it was a very worth while program to be in. One kid I spoke with, felt that he would be nowhere today without the program. The program made him what he is today, with all the opportunities offered to him.

I had the opportunity to be in this program because I come from a single parent, low income family. I feel that this is a very good program, and it would be nice if private businesses could contribute funds or provide jobs, so that all kids can be offered this type of program.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RAYMOND JACKSON, MONTEBELLO HIGH SCHOOL, DENVER, CO

The Problems of Teenage Dropouts and Why I Couldn't

Teenage dropouts is a critical problem in today's society especially with minority youth. Present statistics indicate that 50% of all minority students do not graduate from high school. There are many factors that contribute to this problem such as parent and teacher expectations.

Many parents are not actively involved with their children. They need to stay in touch with what their children are doing in school as well outside of school. Television is not a babysitter that feeds children a "soap opera" view of life. Children need structure and a consistent set of rules. Structure at home will provide the discipline necessary to do well in school and acquire good study skills.

Because of grouping, students can easily lose self-esteem and become humiliated. Even in the first grade, the good readers seem to receive more attention than the poor readers. They are praised and move much quicker than the "slower" students. It is difficult to break this mold, be cause, obviously, the task of catching up is unobtainable. Two of my cousins who have dropped out of high school tell about being made fun of or laughed at if they made a mistake. Even the teacher would sometimes laugh. Students need to feel important even if they are not the greatest reader.

Ditching is an easy habit to get into. Sometimes, peer pressure forces students to skip school. It is difficult to turn so-called friends down. My mother has a wonderful response to peer pressure. She says, "You are the only peer, and I'm the pressure. So, there's no excuse for you to drop out." Students need to be strong and realize the importance of school.

Schools have a responsibility to the potential dropout also. My school has a new, exciting program called Media Pride. The themes are related. We will soon do a unit on War which will include social studies, English, math and science. The teachers know what each other is teaching. They are very serious about work and attendance.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TRINITE ALDANA, COLORADO YOUTH CORPS, RAMAH, CO

The philosophy of Colorado Youth Corps is to take a group of girls and boys from all kinds of backgrounds and races and bring them together as a family type group. We work together as one and become more independent and responsible for ourselves. We also do work that will teach us skills we will need in the future, like working with others and working with a boss. Our motto is a quote from Teddy Roosevelt, "Far and away, the best prize that life has to offer is the opportunity to work hard at work worth doing." We hold this quote very high in our thoughts.

We are a residential program for 45 youth. We live together for eight weeks in the summer at a base camp in the Colorado mountains. We just finished our third year. I have been a corps member for all three years.

At the start of the program we went through a week of orientation at camp Cal-Wood. We, as a group, went through a lot of initiatives to learn the two T's and the two C's which are trust, teamwork, cooperation and communication. We went through a ropes course, trust falls and other helpful experiences to mold us into a group.

After our crews were chosen, we all went on a wilderness trip. It was three days of hiking, back packing and rafting. The purpose of this was so the crew leaders and corps members could build a tight bond of trust and work together as a crew.

The work we set out to do is to maintain trails built years ago by the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps), and to build new trails, wildlife ponds, repair old picnic tables and fire rings in the parks, and to keep the parks nice for tourists and Colorado residents. We worked on projects in crews of seven people. Some crews do what we call spike camps. That's when a crew camps out in tents for a couple of weeks working on a specific project. We are very polite with the public around us. When we are working we respect them and go about our own business. And we are friendly and answer any questions they may ask us. We learn how to work.

We do educational courses through a local college. We work individually on work books and sometimes computers. Some of us work toward getting English and math credits to graduate, and some of us get our GED's. This has helped several people, myself included, to get our high school diploma.

Many corpsmembers and staff build tight friendships that last a long time. We look up to the staff as models. We respect them and what they say. What they say and do can influence us for the rest of our life. The staff treat us like adults, not children, and with respect, also.

Relationships between corpsmembers are really important in order to work together well. We trust each other and build great friendships even though we are from different backgrounds, races and locations in the state. Male or female, we all become really good friends and seem to become one big family. And the bonds we build will last us the rest of our life.

At the end of the summer we have a banquet to celebrate everything that has happened over the summer and the things we have accomplished. The banquet is held at a really nice place, so we end the summer all dolled up.

We go home with a lot of great skills, memories and friendships that we can never seem to forget.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF ANDREW NESTOR, OUTPATIENT AND SCHOOL GROUP PROGRAMS, HAGERSTOWN, MD

I am representing the Health Department Outpatient and School Group program, and am writing to explain how these programs meet the needs of the youth and why they were successful for me. I've been to the Health Department's Outpatient Program twice, once in 1983 for three months and from July to October 1985. I also have over a year of sobriety and owe it to the help of these two programs, as well as AA, NA, CA, and most of all Roxbury, the rehabilitation center I went to.

The programs I have mentioned meet the needs of youth in several ways. To begin, the youth are informed of alcoholism and drug addiction and the effects they have on the body. Young people also learn to detect the signs of alcoholism and drug addiction and learn how to treat the disease. Finally, they can find out when and where AA, NA and CA meetings are.

There are many reasons why these two programs were successful for me. One of them is to remember I am an addict and an alcoholic and am powerless over any mind altering chemicals. Another reason they were successful is that I was able to meet serious recovering people who were around my age. It gave me the opportunity to be with them and go to meetings with them outside of the two programs I am talking about. Also, the Health Department's program gave me an experience that prepared me for school. I learned how to deal with old acquaintances who were still in their addiction and also, how to deal with people around me who talked about using, selling or individuals pulling out drugs in front of me. Another and last way these programs have helped is that I was able to share with students in my school and in Williamsport my experience, strength and hope.

In conclusion, these programs inform the youth of this disease and was very successful for myself. I just hope many more of these programs are formed and others like them around the world.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF SHERRI GIBBS, PROJECT INDEPENDENCE, ANNAPOLIS, MD

My name is Sherri Gibbs. I am 18 years old and in the 11th grade. I represent Project Independence of Anne Arundel County, Maryland.

What is Project Independence? It is a program created from the Federal Family Support Act of 1988. In the designing of Project Independence it ensures the level of service required by federal law. Its mission is to help children and young adults who are grant recievers of the Act for Families with Dependent Children an opportunity to become economically self-sufficient. Many of the clients are mandatory and some have volunteered for the program.

Project Independence addresses issues such as allowing the participants to go back to school and acquire a high school diploma or a G.E.D. Many clients have entered into another educational or employment training program. This program tries very hard to address the needs that often are barriers that stop clients from from becoming successful. Some needs are met through promoting skills in communication, self-esteem, small-group discussion, one-on-one counseling, field trips, topic speakers, and some clietns have mentors.

I believe what makes this program a success are the many people in Project Independence that give of themselves. These caring people put long hours in planning and preparing to help meet our needs and goals. Many of the clients are greatful to have people like these because some of us have no one who cares. I, as a client in Project Independence, have focused on becoming successful and feeling good about myself. I am sure other clients feel the same way.

LETTERS FROM JOHN F. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, SILVER SPRING, MD

1901 Randolph Road
Silver Spring, MD, 20902
September 25, 1990.

Dear Members of Congress:

My name is Donna MacDay. I am sixteen years old and a sophomore at John F. Kennedy High School in Silver Spring, Md.

When I was a little girl, I went to Greenwood Elementary, Forest Knolls, and Lee Middle School.

My disability is called Ataxia Telangiectasia (AT) and it is a breakdown of the bloodvessels therefore, I have sores. That means I can't be hit very hard or I will get a sore. Also, I cannot walk. That means I am in a wheelchair. I also have tremors and I cannot control them. I try to go out and do things so I am not cooped up in the house all day. With my disability, I have to be pulled out of school if anyone has chicken pox because it would be very bad for me.

I hope to be married someday so I can function on my own. I hope to be a fashion designer. I would like to design dresses and other clothes that are unique.

Sincerely,
Donna MacDay

Dear Congress:

My name is Matt Dluzak. I am 14 years old. I am a Freshman at Kennedy. My disability is a blood disease.

Sincerely,
Matt Dluzak

My name is Tommy Lewis and I've been in the Learning Center for six years now. When I was younger I though being learning disabled was the most terrible thing in the world. I hated it so much it was eating me up inside. I never really considered myself learning disabled. I always thought as myself as just a regular kid with no problems. For a while I used to imagine what life would be like without my disability, but with all the friends that I made some at my school others far away I've started to adjust a bit. I've kept my learning disability a secret from my friends because I didn't want anyone to know about it, make fun of me, or treat me different just because I learn things at a slow pace.

As time went on I wanted to prove that my learning disability wasn't something permanent so I decided to work real hard in school. Concentrating on my school work would give me the push to go over the edge. As a result of that I've made the honor roll and recieved a letter. A while back I went to Thomas S. Weston High School for an award for the First Annual African-

American Festival of Academic Excellence. A year before that Mr Alton my old career counselor told me that I did a wonderful job working at N.I.H. the hospital was going to welcome more kids to work there over the summer. During my last day working at N.I.H. Dr Rosen invited me and his secretary to treat me for lunch as a going away present, thanking me for the work I did over the summer.

So even though I hated being in the learning center I've had some nice things happening to me. But because of my anger against the center I had forgotten how much I've accomplished here at John F. Kennedy High School.

Now that I'm a senior I sort of think about how my life has changed by the time I entered as a freshman to where I as now. Some of my friends think that I shouldn't be in the Learning Center at all, because I do so well in school and on my grades, teachers told a long time ago that if I ask for harder work, I be able to get out of the Learning Center and into a regular class. Ever since then I've been working all alone of my school work asking for as little help as possible trying to make my way out. I seem to be doing a great job.

Dear Members of Congress,

My name is Mary McBride. I am 15 years old. The school I go to is Kennedy High School. I am in 10th grade. I've gone to many schools in my life because my father's in the military. I've been to Germany, New Jersey, Texas, Colorado, and Alabama. I'm not the only child in my family.

I have a disability called spina bifida which means I had a hole in my back when I was born which messed up my nervous system. My back was curved until last summer because I had spinal surgery on it. Also I have a shunt on the right side of my head and I have a left hemiparesis which means I'm spastic on the left side.

In tow years I would like to go to college, probably Maryland State University. And then after college I would like to become a model and then raise a family.

Sincerely,
Mary

Dear Sir:

My name is Janetta Moore. I am currently a 17 year-old 11th grade student at John F. Kennedy High School in Silver Spring, Maryland.

I live in Washington, DC. The reason why I go to school in Maryland is because I have a disability called Cerebral Palsy. When I was little, they did not have a program for disabled students in Washington. Therefore, I was forced to attend school in Maryland. My school is main-streamed, which means handicapped

students inter-act with normal students.

I use a communication device to communicate better. I am an honor roll student. There are a lot of competitions just like a normal student would have, such as keeping my grades up.

I have all types of friends, disabled and normal. They treat me the same as everybody else.

I was so glad to find out that the law passed to allow disabled people to go out into the work force. That would mean that society is excepting the disabled as one.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Please give me a response to acknowlege your receipt of this letter.

Sincerely,
Janetta Moore

Hello my name is April Denise Lestaevel. I am now 16 and a Junior at John F. Kennedy High School. I like to be known as understanding because I am.

I have a disability and my disability is that I can read but I can't read or wright as well as others. I am pretty sure that it's something I can control. I have no problems being known as a person with a disability.

So far I have friends that know but don't care. I've been on the John F. Kennedy cheerleading team for three years, two on Junior Varsity, and one on Varsity. I was captain of the Junior Varsity last year.

I've accomplished getting a job on my own. I now work at a store called Naturalizers. I have my Driver's Licence, and fI do some fashion shows. I will also be graduating next year with all my credits. It goes to show you that some people can do a lot of things with a disability.

My future goals are to become a professional model or actor, maybe a cosmotalogist. I want to show people that you can be famous even if you have a disability.

Yours truly,
April Lestaevel

My name is Heather Whitley. I'm a junior at Kennedy High School. I'm in J.F.K. Chorus and Rockville Civiteen which is a teen club for learning disabled teenagers. We go camping, baseball games and dancing. My disabilities are in speech, learning and emotional areas.

I'm learning how to drive and waterski. I hope to drive next year. I also hope to attend Towson State College when I graduate and major in Elementary Education. I also hope to overcome my disabilities.

Fondly,
Heather D. Whitley

Hello! My name is Faten Haddad, but you can call me Theresa. I am 16 1/2 years old and a junior at John F. Kennedy High School. I live with my Mom, Dad, and 4 sisters and I am the oldest of my 4 sisters. I was not born here in America. I was born in Jorden. I came here when I was almost six years old. I had no trouble understanding and learning English, reading, spelling, writing. It was the best working at Jerry's Sub Shop. I have been working there for almost 2 years. And it is really fun! I meet very nice people everyday. I wish I could meet you, but you have my letter instead.

I have been in the learning Center for 7 years. I have been improving my skills for 7 years. I've learned so much the past 7 years, and it is not so bad having a learning disability. You just have to realize that you are a human being, and should be treated like one. I sometimes have a hard time understanding and doing my work in school. But I've realized it takes time to improve and cope with a learning disability.

I love to work with my hands. I have always enjoyed drawing ever since I was a little girl. In school, I am taking a ceramics class. I love to cook, paint, sew, and make dolls for little children to play with. I enjoy creating different clothes for people to wear. And to add to all of this, I will soon be a Maryland driver. You can still do things that you have always dreamed of doing. Just because you have a learning disability doesn't mean you can'd do the things you always wanted to do. Don't stop trying, keep reaching for your dreams and goals. Like I have, and will continue to do so.

Sincerely,
Faten Haddad

Dear Congress,

My name is Deborah Freeman. I go to Kennedy High School. I'm in the 9th grade. I'm 15 years old. My disability is scholiosis which means my back is curved but it's better now. Good-bye.

From your friend,
Deborah Freeman

Dear Members of Congress,

My name is Trista Fearson. I am 15 years old. My birthday if April 1, 1975. I am a freshman at Kennedy High School. My handicap is C.P. (Cerebral Palsy).

Yours Truly,
Trista Fearson

Dear Members of Congress:

My name is Kewa Kemp. I am 16 years old. I am a sophomore in high school. My handicap is Spina Bifida. I go to John F. Kennedy High School.

Sincerely,
Kewa Kemp

Dear Members of Congress,
My name is Chris Amtower. I am 13 years old. My birthday is November 3, 1976. I have Spina Bifida. I go to John F. Kennedy High School.

Sincerely,
Chris Amtower

My name is Stacey Roberts and I'm 16 years old. I'm a junior at John F. Kennedy high school in Silver Spring Maryland. I have a learning disability and it has affected me in a lot of ways. In the good ways, I'm a member in Chorus, track team, and I've even tried out for cheerleading. Unfortunately I didn't make the team, but it hasn't stopped me from trying out my senior year! Because my disability is in reading, spelling, and writing, it has delayed my learning process. I learn at a slower pace. I learn by seeing things more than by hearing. I am determined to accomplish and overcome my disability.

I like shopping, playing basketball, and I <u>love</u> watching football, <u>college basketball</u>, and <u>soccer</u>. By the way, Georgetown Hoyas is my favorate college basketball team.

My future goals are: Travel to Europe one of these days, join ski club, and become a lawyer or a teenage psychologist. And yes, I will be driving soon!!!

Sincerely,
Stacey Ann Tora Roberts

[Whereupon, at 12 noon, the Task Force adjourned.]